
Thomas a Kempis, of the Imitation of
CHRIST, Book II. Chap. I. At
the Beginning.

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Christ will come to thee and shew thee his Consolation, if thou prepare him within thee an abode fit to receive him.

His Visits to the inward Man are frequent, his Converse sweet, his Comforts refreshing, great the Peace he brings, and his Condescension amazing.

Make ready thy Heart, O faithful Soul, for this Bridegroom, that it may please him to come to thee and dwell in thee.

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THE
OECONOMY
OF THE
Co-operation of MAN
WITH THE
Operation of G O D.

WHEREIN

The Essential and most Important Points
OF

Religion and Divinity,

SUCH AS

The Grace of God, Faith, Purification, (or
Sanctification) Justification, Regeneration
and Perseverance, are Radically and Fun-
damentally Explain'd.

Written Originally in *French*, By *Peter Pairet*.

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THE
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T H E

PREFACE.



THE very Title of this Book, which is, Of the Co-operation of Man, with the Operation of God; is enough to inform you, that those Things are not here treated of, which God has done for the Salvation of Man, as they are consider'd in God, or in his internal Will, or in Christ, as the First Fruits and Head of all: For so, and in that Sense, it may be said, that on God's part all is prepar'd, and as it were done and perform'd already, and that they that believe in Christ (tho' but imperfectly) are reputed and look'd upon at present as Dead, as reviv'd and risen with Christ, as Justified, as Glorified, and as now sitting in Heaven, and there Blessed with all kinds of Blessings, &c. and this no doubt is sometimes St. Paul's meaning: But chiefly and more especially as they are by God wrought in Man really, and as Man is himself made

The Preface.

a Communicant and partaker of them by a true and effectual introadmission and reception of them; there being no way but this to set him truly free from the Evils that deprave and enslave him, to Cure him of his inward Distempers, and fit him to receive, cherish, and preserve his happiness; (which else would be but a reputed or imputed one; and he but reputedly happy, and really Miserable.) And as this is the main business of Scripture, so it is of Man too while he lives here.

This Book has for its subject the most essential, most necessary and useful points in all Divinity. How well I may have perform'd my part in the Explication of them I dare not say. They are few in number, but abundant in sense. I have broke off the Chapters when they grew too long, that the Reader might pause and breath a while. The Dignity and Sublimity of the matters is of itself such, that, in the Opinion of all, the Intellect and Pen of an Angel could not come up to it, how much less then should a Creature so imperfect and ignorant as I am? I therefore must desire the Reader to look upon what I have done with Equity and Charity as in the presence of God, who alone is able to enlighten our Souls, and dispel our Darkness by the clear Light of his Truth; of which I shall say no more at present; the best way being to address our selves to him, and implore his Assistance.

The Preface.

O God, the Adorable Light, and sole Fountain of Good, the scope and end of all Things, but who art a lover of Reality and Deeds, rather than of Notions and Words; I could heartily wish this Oblation I make were a Transcript of the Life in my Heart; but alas! to my great Sorrow and Confusion, 'tis only a Copy of my Thoughts and Speculations; nor should I, doubtless, be so over forward to push out Leaves without Fruit! Shall I say in my Defence, that as I saw Mens false Notions and Theories concerning those Matters, put them out of the way to Thee and thy Divine Operations, I was of Opinion that juster Notions, though nearly Speculative, might engage them in the search of the right way, and so by an indiscreet Zeal choose rather to neglect my self by thinking on others, and to busy my Thoughts in this Composition, than be wanting to them in a matter wherein I believed I might give them some Assistance? Thou, O God, knowest my Heart, and likewise, that I should be very glad if my inconsiderateness shall occasion any not only to Meditate as I have, but also to practice and do, which I have not. If so, (and that is what I heartily desire) the praise of it would redound to thy Majesty, and I am indifferent from whom. And happily, upon the Intercession (as I hope) of those pious Souls that may by thy Blessing receive some Benefit from my words,

The Preface

minds, thou wilt not impute to me as sin
this my too hasty Zeal, nor suffer it, on the
Faults I may here be guilty of through my
exceeding great Ignorance and Blindness, to
prove occasions of my Damnation; nay,
wilt graciously be pleased to restore with
Usury the time I have lost to my self, by
my Design to employ it for the Benefit of
others. Thou art the great and wonderful
God to whom nothing is impossible, who
canst do far above all that we can desire
or think. O adorable Light, O Truth more
piercing than a two-edged Sword, dart and
shine into the Center of our Hearts, and
grant that while the Light shines we may
walk in the Light least Darkness overtake
us, and swallow us up.

DE 61

THE

THE
 CONTENTS
 OF THE
 CHAPTERS
 IN THE
 Fifth Volume.

CHAP. I.

OF the Internal Operation of God ^{Page}
 gainst the Pelagians. 21

CHAP. II.

Of Man's Co-Operation with God's Grace,
 that it is free, true, but not prevent-
 ing, &c. 22

CHAP. III.

Of Faith, and first of Dead Faith. 58

CHAP. IV.

Of a lively and true Faith, and what it
 is with relation to the Desire. 76
 a CHAP.

The CONTENTS.

CHAP. V.

Of the Purification of the Soul.

Page
131

CHAP. VI.

Of the Purification of the Soul after Death.

That there is such a state for Souls that depart in the state of Grace, but not of perfect Holiness and Purity.

157

CHAP. VII.

Six Difficulties touching the Purification after Death, with their Solution.

185

CHAP. VIII.

Of JUSTIFICATION.

216

CHAP. IX.

Of Regeneration, and, by the way, of the Peace of the Soul.

250

CHAP. X.

Of PERSEVERANCE.

302

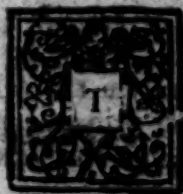


THE
OECONOMY
OF THE
Co-operation of Man,
WITH THE
Operation of GOD.

CHAP. I.

*Of the Internal Operation of God, against
the Pelagians.*

I.



THE Co-operation of Man with the Operation of God is a Subject of that vast extent, that I shall not pretend to exhaust it in this Treatise. The most I design is to propose the true Principles of it, and to treat of some of the chief Branches or most considerable sorts of it, without descending to the exact Enumeration of all the particular manners of it, which are infinitely various, and have a hundred and a hundred different sorts of ways and circumstances, according to the divers dispositions of

B

Souls.

I. The
Design of
this Treatise.

Chap. I. *Soul.* I shall likewise pass over whatever is of it self so plain that it is already sufficiently known and unquestionable, and shall insist only on such necessary Things as are not either well enough consider'd, or touching which Men lye under dangerous prejudices that ought to be remov'd, as being great Obstacles to the Salvation of such as are prepossessed with them.

In speaking of the Co-operation of Man with God, it will be impossible at the same time not to speak of the Operation of God in Man; for they are inseparable and relative one to the other. But as much united as they are we must not confound them, nor make one Thing of them instead of two.

II. *God and the Creature do each of them operate in the Affair of Salvation.* It is not the Creature only that operates or acts in the matter of its Salvation. Nor is it God only that operates or that acts in it: But it is God and the Creature that truly and properly operate and act therein both of them. The Creature acts as matter without form, tending to what it yet has not: And God acts as a Divine form, that illuminates and perfects the inform matter and acts which the Creature presents to him, or rather, the Creature by its action finds a subject and matter, but without all form and dark, that has nothing in it but what is natural; for every Creature is naturally active, as soon as ever it is in being; but 'tis God that by his action in it produces that Divine, Supernatural and Heavenly form in it, which it must have before it can be Divine, Heavenly and Worthy of God.

III. *Two kinds of contrary Errors; Pelagianism, and the denial of the Operation of Creatures.* There are two contrary Errors to be carefully avoided, the one, that of the *Pelagians*, that deny the true Operation of God in Souls, and admit of none but the Creatures only: The other is of certain rigid Metaphysicians, who, upon Grounds and Reasons which their prejudices will not suffer them to see the falseness of, will allow the Creature neither principle nor act of Operation, reserving to God alone the whole Power of Operating.

IV. These

IV. These are both pernicious Errors, but the first more than the second, as I think my self the rather oblig'd to demonstrate, because some have been either so unjust or else so ignorant as to give out, that what I had written concerning Grace, was meer *Pelagianism*, upon no other Grounds but my holding Liberty and the Operation of the Creature. The darkness of their Minds must needs be very great who think these Sentiments are incompatible with the assertion of God's Grace; which is so far from Truth, that there could be no place for the Grace and Operation of God, if there were no such thing as the Liberty and Operation of the Creature: For the Operation or Activity of the Creature is the subject where the Grace of God is to reside, and the matter it is to perfect, and Liberty the Door at which it is to enter. And to suspect this thought of *Pelagianism*, is to be very Ignorant what *Pelagianism* is.

IV. God's Grace, far from over-throwing strength-ens the Liberty and Operation of the Creature.

V. The Character of *Pelagius*, or of a *Pelagian*, is this. He is one that in Things of the Spirit is perfectly stupid and blind, and that sees nothing but what the brutish Animal, and carnal Man sees, with the Eyes of his perverted Reason, and of his corrupt Nature. This wretchedly blind Creature not being able to imagine that Man was by God created in an infinitely more Divine, more bright and purer State than he is in at present, conceives him as coming out of God's Hands in a state pretty near what he is in at present; not only gross, corruptible, and mortal, as to his Body; but (not at all thinking of the divine faculty of Faith, illuminated by the Word of God, nor of that of pure and heavenly Love, nor of the most divine and interiour faculties of the Soul that enjoy'd God and his perfections of Righteousness, Truth, Wisdom and perfect Holiness, with the rest) acknowledges only Human Reason, and that too very ignorant and narrow, much after the manner it now is.

V. What Pelagianism is.

From this Supposition, that the nature of Man and Things were before the Fall much what they are at this Day found to be in a Man sensual, stupid, and dead to Things Divine. (as *Pelagius* and his Followers were,) he ought to infer, as *Pelagius* did,

Chap.

I.

That Sin had wrought very little change or ravage in Man.

That Man after it, continued almost the same he was before, with the same Faculties, Powers and Reason.

And that so, it was a very small matter and easy for him to recover his former State, especially, supposing God should offer him outwardly the external Grace of Revelation, with some Ceremonies, with which, through an Historical Faith, which Reason say the Devil was able to give to this external Grace, it was easy for him to retrieve his Primitive Righteousness without any need of an inward and operating Grace, infus'd immediately by God into the Souls.

That this is the Case of all Men Born of *Adam* since the Fall.

That it is but an idle Fancy to think they once had, and afterwards lost, an original Righteousness and Holiness, and to hold that they are Born so corrupt and impotent, as by and from their very Birth to be in the Chains of Death, from which nothing but the inward Grace and Operation of God can possibly deliver them.

This is the substance of the *Pelagian* Heresy, the most brutish, foolish and damnable that ever was vented by the Emissaries of Hell. It has of late been reviv'd by the *Socinians*, and by some of the Remonstrants, for I am in hopes they are not all infected with such pernicious Errors.

VI. *This Heresy is already confuted in the foregoing Treatise.*

VI. Now I would fain know, if upon reading what has been offer'd in the Treatises of Creation, of Sin, and of the Restoration of Man, whether it ought not to be confess'd that Heaven is not farther from Hell than my Sentiments are from the Heretical and Devilish Doctrine of *Pelagius*, which I so heartily abominate, that I know nothing under Heaven that I have so perfect an aversion to. What I have demonstrated in the first Treatise concerning the Grandeur and Excellence wherein Man was created, entirely overthrows it, or at least is a sufficient proof that I am infinitely far from believing any such thing. What I have said in the second touching Man's Fall, and the Abyss of Misery he thereby plung'd himself into, is of equal force against it. And the nine first Chapters of the

Third

Third Treatise, where I speak of the Impotence of Man, and of the necessity of God's Grace and Operations, do so fundamentally and fully destroy it, that I might very well be excused from saying any more of it, either to clear my self from any suspicion of *Pelagianism*, or to cut the sinews of this Capital Heresy, did I not believe we cannot use too great precaution against so dangerous an Infection, which some in our Days have again endeavour'd so industriously to spread.

VII. All the Dignity of Man, his end, his aim, his true place and element, wherein he should be and live, is, that he be united to God, that he have God living and operating in the Center of his Soul, and in his Divine Faculties. Without this, he is without God, and truly an Atheist of the most refin'd and destructive sort. Men commonly look only on the Atheism of Discourse, when a Man openly denies the Being of God, or on the Atheism of Reason and Judgement, when he thinks there is no God: but there is an Atheism of the Soul, and of the Heart, which is not enough taken notice of, which yet is of great and almost the only one of any consideration with God. For the Atheism of Reason, and of Talk, are but the leaves of this Atheism of the Heart, which will neither acknowledge nor receive God living, illuminating, moving and operating in it and in the Soul. And such is the Atheism of *Pelagianism*.

Chap.
L

VII.
Pelagianism is one of the most subtle and pernicious sorts of Atheism.

'Tis as impossible for one living and dying in it to be Sav'd, as for the Devil himself: For the Soul of such a one being void of God and of his Operation, and refusing to acknowledge its Misery, or the means of its delivery, is like a Sick Man that having no Principle of Health and (if I may so say) of true Life, resolves not to trouble himself to know what Health, what Sickness, what Physician, and Physick is: And so dying in this Condition, is as certainly depriv'd of God, as the Devil himself is: I know nothing more deplorable and desperate.

In Pelagianism Salvation is absolutely impossible.

VIII. If God be the God of Man, how is he or can he be so, unless he dwell and operate in the interior

VIII.
God's being Man's

God proves that he dwells and operates in his Heart.

Chap.

I.

of his Soul? Is he the God of his belly, to give him Meat and Drink? Or is he the God of his Eyes and Ears, to entertain him with fine sights and speeches? Is he the God of Reason, to give him rare, Superficial, cold and barren Speculations, and the Power to produce such without going any further? Is he not the God of the bottom of the Heart, and of the innermost part of the Soul, which is Man's chief and most essential part? But how should he be so unless he acted upon the Heart, and upon the understanding, and united himself to them? For he is no ones God but by the Communication of himself: Nor does he communicate himself to a Soul without operating in it; For God is not a dead, inactive stock or stone.

IX. Tho' God and his Operations were upon Man's Sin withdrawn from him, yet in consideration of the Merits of Christ, he came again to him.

IX. 'Tis true that as God cannot stay where Sin is, when Man would commit it, God withdrew from him, and his Divine Operations ceas'd in his Soul: And therefore 'tis, that Man since the Fall without God's Grace is no better than the Devil, and indeed worse, because in this World he can more abuse God's Creatures than the Devil can: But it is true also that the Love of God, moved by the Merits and Prayers of his Son, is so great, that he is willing to draw near to Man again, to insinuate into him, and beset and operate in his interior, not at first by way of Union, but only by transient and repeated Impulses, by calls and attractions of Light and Love, which the most blind and insensible may discern upon the least attention to what passes within them; for such they certainly have; otherwise they would even in this Life be Devils; the only difference between the Devils and Man, being God's yet visiting the one by his inward calls and Divine Favours to save him, if he gets the consent of his Liberty; and his not doing so to the other, for Reasons elsewhere given.

X. Why all Men at all times are not sensible of God and his Operations.

X. But, the *Pelagians*, it may be, will say, if it were true that God operated inwardly in the Soul by Grace immediately acting upon it, why are not we sensible of it? A mighty difficulty this, to ground the denial of God's acting in our Hearts upon; those that should

deny

deny there was any such thing as animal Spirits in our Bodies, because we are not sensible of them, would, upon this doughty Principle, that what we are not sensible of, is not, be irrefragable Reasoners. But does it not pray mightily become such as by their continual distractions, by their frivolous employs, and the hardness of their Hearts, render the strokes of God insensible, to argue thus? What wonder is it if *Pelagians* do not feel the Operations of God in their interiour!

'Tis true indeed even good Men that do not resist Grace, are nevertheless very often without the sensible perception of it, at least in so extraordinary a manner as is answerable to the greatness of the Almighty Operation of a God intimately present in them, and by himself acting upon them. This is still * another Miracle of the Operation of Grace, and of the Divine Presence, that they are not infinitely sensible where they really are. God works this Miracle for many Reasons necessary both to the Life and Salvation of Man.

* See the
first Mi-
racle of
Grace.
Oec. of
the Rest,
before
the Inc.

Ch. VI. n. 6. *The Second. ibid.* Ch. VIII. n. 10. *This is a Third.*

He hides himself and makes himself less sensibly perceived, for fear Man should Pride himself in his Gifts, and so they should be his Ruin.

And by this means he gives Man occasion to excercise his Faith, and Love, and Hope, more purely; to loosen himself better from his own sensibility; to dye to all regard to himself, and to the eminency of his own State while he feels neither the sweetness nor the attractions of it; and so he becomes more worthy of reward.

Moreover, God well knows, that were the Operation of his inward Light sensibly perceiv'd by Man, either by discovering to him the greatness of his own Evils, or by giving him a sight of the beauty of God, he would upon the prospect of the first dye of despair and sorrow; and of the second, of amazement or (if in a state of great purity) of meer Joy. One to whom God were sensible according to his greatness, could no longer live, nor if he did live, be suitable Company for

Chap. 1. other Men ; all would be to him a meer nothing, even as to his perception of it by his Senses, as is evident from the extasies of Saints.

Besides, good Souls would be often vex'd and tormented by their blind Guides, who would oppose God in them if he made himself felt according to his own greatness ; whereas by thus concealing himself, the one remain undisturb'd, and the other have no occasion given them so openly to fight against God, whose wonders were they sensibly felt, they would decry as illusions and extravagancies. What God does, he does well.

XI. *Refutation of the false Reasons oppos'd to the inward operation of God's Grace.*

XI. 'Tis in vain therefore to pretend to invalidate the Operations of God's Grace upon these and other like weak pretences: For there are not wanting those that oppose and contradict this Truth. (a) Some while they own they feel no such thing as Divine Grace, and that they have no perception of it in their Hearts, that is to say, while they are insensible and have their Eyes shut against the Operations of the Holy Spirit, conclude from thence, that all is illusion and fancy ; whereas they should only conclude that they deprive and make themselves unworthy of it by their resistance and presumption, and that they are themselves blind, and cannot see the Kingdom of God.

And they deny this immediate Operation, because (b) ordinarily when we have good and holy motions, it is after reading, meditating or hearing a Sermon ; which as if I should say the Sun did not immediately enlighten me, because when I enjoy the Light of it, it is upon my going out of a dark place, and opening my Eyes.

The same Conclusion they likewise draw from the consideration that Man has still an understanding left to comprehend Truth ; and a will, that desires good ; a Conscience, to accuse or excuse him ; Reason, to ar-

(a) See Le Clerks's *Entretiens sur diverses matieres de Theologie. Part. 1. Entr. 1, 2. and Part 2. Entr. 3, 4. Whence also was taken what is hereafter refuted.*

(b) Entr. 1. Pag. 22. &c.

gue aright; and that having ability to know there is a God, and that he is our Benefactor, and that he is lovely in the highest degree and above all the Creatures, one may (as they think) by the meer strength of Reason be converted and love God sincerely and unfeignedly, without any need of the Holy Spirit's giving us Faith and Charity, by the infusion of his Grace. Dreadful Blindness! That not only overthrows the Holy Scriptures, but confounds many Operations of the Holy Spirits into one; but which is yet absurd, tho' the understanding were not naturally Ignorant, and full of Errors, nor the Will deprav'd and remiss, nor the Conscience asleep and deceitful, nor Reason wholly perverted.

Suppose then all these whole and sound: Yet upon this false Supposition, their reasoning would be no better than if I should say, my Eyes are good and can discern Light from Darkness, white from black, and one thing from another, the right way from the wrong; my Legs are strong and I can walk, therefore I need no Light to act immediately upon me and direct me.

But say they, this Light is the Scripture and the Light of Nature.

Blindness again! The Letters and Words of Scripture are no more the Light of the Soul, than the Letters and Word *Sun* are the Light of the Body. As to the *Light of Nature*, if by it be meant Reason, as it is distinguish'd from Faith, 'tis still blindness to take that for the Light of the Soul; its Ideas being only empty, dry and superficial, and not the real, solid and eternal Truth and Good; (I have explain'd this in the Treatise of the *Oeconomy of the Creation*) and if by the *Light of Nature* be meant the impressions and motions of Faith, to which the Soul feels it self incited, these are the immediate Operations of the Holy Spirit, by which we should soon come to the full enjoyment of God did we but entirely give our selves up to them by renouncing our corrupt Affections and our Self-love: But our adhering to them hinders, streightens and limits the effects of this Work of the Holy Spirit, which by that means degenerate into effects that savour of the Servitude and Bondage of the Soul;

Chap.
I.

Soul; and thence comes, what we call the *Spirit of Bondage*, which the Ignorance of some takes to be a meer idle Imagination.

So absurd is this way of Reasoning, tho' all were whole and sound in Man: But all his Faculties being, as really they are, deprav'd, dull and heavy, turn'd towards Things that have but the show and appearance of Good, deceiv'd by them, yet strongly set on these Vanities; they argue just as if one struck with a Dead Palsy should say, I have Arms, Hands and Legs, Feet and a Body, and the natural Offices of these Members, is to dress me, to labour and to walk; therefore 'tis all a story to tell me I must needs have some body to come and cure me, to help me, and dress me, &c. And are not Men, thus dispos'd, in a rare way of recovery!

XII. *Advertisement of the necessity of the inward and operative Grace of the Holy Spirit.*

XII. Those that rightly understand the Principles we go upon are sufficiently guarded against these dangerous Errors, so that I need not descend to a particular Refutation of them. The sight alone of the Truth will effectually do it, which in brief is this, and ought fully to convince us of the necessity of the Operations of the Holy Spirit.

It is certain God created Man to take his delight in him by his Union with him, and by dwelling and residing in him. Now God is infinite Light and infinite Love. He has indeed given Man Faculties to desire him freely and infinitely; but could not give him the Power to produce him; for 'tis plain God could not make himself the work and effect of Man. The infinite Light and Love being inseparable from God, and being God himself can not be presented to the Soul but with God, and by him. This consequence is certainly just; and therefore all that Man can effect, and all his Operations, are neither the Truth nor the Love; and if Man take them for this, he errs mortally. These Vertues are the infusions of God, as I may say, or rather God himself, acting in the Soul; and 'tis then Man is said to believe with a Divine Faith, and to love God, when he gives up his Faculties, his desire, and his consent to the Impressions of the Light and Love of God.

It

Chap.

I.

If it were thus before the Fall, much more when the Soul has deprav'd its desire, voluntarily turn'd it away from God, has depriv'd herself of the Light and Love of God, much more, I say, can then nothing but God set right this desire towards God: For whoever else should undertake it but God himself acting upon the desire, could give it only his own Impressions, and so do nothing but pervert it. And supposing this desire of Man and all his other Faculties, were restor'd to their first State, yet who could cause to arise in them the Light and the Love but God himself, who is this Light and Love? True, Man is oblig'd to Love, that is, to co-operate with Love, by turning his Desires and Aspirations towards it; and if he does so with Humility and Vacuity, God then by his Grace gives him his Divine Love; but if he presumptuously thinks he can attain it without the immediate Operation and Grace of the Holy Spirit, he is assuredly in the most mortal Error that ever Hell brought forth: And all such as are infected with it are in a state of Damnation, and that so much the more dangerously by taking the cold and imaginary draughts of their own Heads, and the disorderly illusions of their hardned Hearts for the Love of God, and by them are made to believe that to Love God is to fancy and persuade themselves that they Love him, and upon this foolish imagination rejoice and triumph.

XIII. How can these Men, that read the Scriptures possibly either not observe or stifle the innumerable Testimonies they meet with there, and are more than enough to strike them dumb, and utterly confound them? Shall Gods Spirit be no longer the Spirit that (a) enlightens, the Spirit that (b) regenerates, (c) the Spirit that sanctifies, (d) the Spirit that produces Charity, Faith, Righteousness, Goodness, Peace, Joy and all the other Fruits which the Apostle ascribes to him? What are the Petitions of the *Lord's Prayer*, the *hallowing of God's Name*, the *coming of his Kingdom*, and the rest, but the Works of the Holy Spirit in our Hearts? Is the time past for us to beg with *David*, that God (e) would establish us with his free Spirit, (f) that his good Spirit may lead us in the right way,

(a) that

XIII. *The proof of this from Scripture.*

- (a) Eph. 1. v. 17.
- 18.
- (b) Joh. 3. v. 5, 6.
- (c) Rom. 15. v.
- 16.
- (d) Gal. 5. v. 22.
- (e) Pl. 51. v. 14.
- (f) Pl. 143. 10.

- Chap. 1. (a) that God would incline our Heart to fear his Name and keep his Commandments, (b) that he would turn it away from Coverousness and Vanity? Must we not now a-days ask of our Heavenly Father the Holy Spirit, which *Christ* says he will give to them that ask? (a) 11. Are we no longer to pray with *St. Paul*, that (c) God 36, 37. would work in us what is well pleasing to him? Shall (c) Luk. the Holy Spirit no longer pray in the Hearts of the 11. 13. the Sons of God with Groans that cannot be utter'd? Heb. 13. Shall he no more pray in them for what is according 21. to God's will? Shall he no more bear Witness with Rom. 8. their Spirit? Shall they no more be the Temples of the 25, 26. Holy Ghost? No more Seal'd with the Holy Spirit? 16. 16. Will he no more be their earnest and pledge? Shall 1 Cor. 6. Men enter into the Kingdom of God by any other Birth 19. but that of the Spirit? Shall they become the Sons of 2 Cor. 6. God by the will of the Flesh or of Man, and not by 16. the Operation of God? Shall any but God and the Eph. 4. Spirit of Wisdom and Revelation, open the Eyes of 30. our understanding to know the hope to which we are ch. 1. v. call'd, and the Riches of his Glory in the Saints, and 13. 14. the exceeding greatness of his Power towards those Joh. 3. that believe by the effectual working of his mighty 5. 6. Power? Shall any thing but God and his Operation ch. 1. v. restore us Life by his great Charity, when we are Dead 12, 13. in (or if you will by) our Trespases and Sins? Shall Eph. 1. it be no longer he that raises us up, and makes us to fit 17, 18, in Heavenly Places in *Christ* to make a glorious display 19. of the exceeding great Riches of his Grace? Are we Eph. 2. not now to be Saved by Grace, by a Faith which is v. 1, 10. the gift of God, and is not of our selves? Shall we not still be God's production and workmanship in *Christ*? Shall God no more strengthen us in the inward Man by his Spirit, and shall *Jesus Christ* no Eph. 3. more dwell in Hearts by Faith? He that by his 16, 17. Power which *worketh in us* mightily, is able to do ibid. v. infinitely above all that we ask or think, is he dead? 20. And are all these Testimonies of his Apostle false? Is it no longer true, that the Sons of God are led and Rom. 8. mov'd by the Spirit of God, and that *He that has 14. not the Spirit of Christ is none of his*. What will become of the Good Promise of the Son of God

He

He that loves me shall be loved of my Father. And I will love him and manifest my self to him. If any one love me he will keep my Commandments, and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him and make our abode with him, or in him. Is this said only for the Apostle? Is to love God and keep his Commandments, think you, the peculiar Character of the Apostles? And of this other? If any one thirst let him come to me and drink. If any one believe in me, out of his Belly shall flow, as the Scripture says, Rivers of living Water. This he spake of the Spirit, that those who believ'd in him should receive.

Chap.

I.

Joh. 14.

21. 23.

Joh. 7.

37, 38,

39.

XIV. To avoid the strength, I don't say, of these Places, for they are too exprels, but of some other to the same purpose, they are pleas'd to say they speak of special and miraculous gifts of the Holy Ghost, that concern the Apostles only. We grant some of them are indeed of that kind. But then this is what should utterly confound them. For if the gift of Tongues or of Miracles, and the like, are Things too great to come from any but the Holy Ghost alone, how can the gift of a lively Hope, and that of Divine Faith, and especially that of Charity, which is the greatest of all gifts, in comparison of which all the miraculous ones are almost nothing, a gift which all Christians and not the Apostles only, must have to be Christians, and to be Saved, come from any, or be the work of any but the Holy Ghost alone? Who can say any thing to this? It must be the Holy Ghost that must do the less but the greater shall be no business of his!

XIV.

They fain would, but cannot, evade the force of some Scriptures they don't understand.

Is not this alone enough to dismount all their Batteries, without needing particularly to refute all the false Interpretations they give of many other Passages? And ought not we to be satisfied (beside the remark we but just now made) that they plainly enough confess themselves blind, and that they do but grope in the dark among Things they have no knowledge of, since they own they have not the Spirit of God, by which alone we can understand the Things that are freely given us of God. That is, say they, an extraordinary gift and only for the Apostles. To them it belong'd to be Spiritual, and to know divine Things. They therefore don't trouble themselves to have this

1 Cor. 2.

11, 12.

gift,

Chap.

I.



gift, seeing they maintain we ought not to ask this Spirit of illumination; and that therefore they are only to pray God to afford them outward favourable opportunities, some publick or private Revolutions in Worldly Affairs; that they may hear good Sermons, and meet with such excellent Books as may teach them they have no need of the Holy Spirit: That he would of his Grace grant they may have good Libraries, a Genius and proper Means to acquire Learning, and diligently read over Heathen Authors to understand the Propriety of Words and Languages, and then use all this *Apparatus* in the Interpretation of Scripture according to the signification such Words have in Profane Authors: In a Word, that he would give them the Grace, to be *Scribes* and *Pharisees*, *Jews* and slavish Adorers of the Letter that kills, and to know nothing of the Spirit that gives Life and the true Sense.

XV. *The
releuing
of some
Passages
of Scrip-
ture from
the false
Sense
they put
upon
them.*

1 Cor. 2.

14.

XV. But their Spirit of the Letter and Paper, with their corrupt Reason, would move ones pity when they pretend to give the meaning of Scripture. They say, for instance, that in the Passages where Saint Paul speaks of the carnal Man, and when he says, *The natural and carnal Man understands not the Things of God; that they are Foolishness unto him, &c.* but the spiritual Man discerns all; we must by the carnal Man understand the Jew and his fond Judaical Opinions; by the natural Man the Philosophers and Worldly Learn'd, and that the spiritual Man principally denotes one that has the extraordinary gifts of the Holy Spirit, by which he is mov'd to fix his Thoughts only on spiritual Things, and has true and right conceptions of them. But this is meer fancy and delusion. *The natural and carnal Man* are one and the same Thing, signifying all such as are not regenerate, and enlighten'd, mov'd and led by the Holy Ghost, but are govern'd by their own natural Light and Motions; and the spiritual Man signifies all those that being Dead to the Corruption of their Nature are become the Sons of God, and Temples of his Holy Spirit, that dwells in them, teaches and enlightens them, and gives them the knowledge of divine Things which others cannot understand, and which are Foolishness to them, as the inward Illumination

nation of the Holy Spirit is to these blind Wretches that are so fool-hardy as to make a jest of it.

Chap.
I.

The Promise of the Holy Spirit we read of in *Joel*, alledg'd by *St. Peter*, and which is to be perfectly fulfilled before the end of the World (and not before the Destruction of *Jerusalem*) comes to the same thing, and is not meant of Divine Dreams and Visions only, which are but accessories of less Importance, the principal being the effusion of the Holy Ghost, that sanctifies the Heart by his immediate Operations, or to speak with *Zachary*, a pouring out of the Spirit of Prayers and Supplication, of saving Faith and Repentance.

Joel 2.
28.
Acts 2.
17.

Zach.
12. 10.

XVI. But what reasoning can be weaker, than to conclude as they do, that there are no immediate Operations of the Holy Spirit in the Hearts of true Believers, because the Scripture in the enumeration of the gifts and operations of the Holy Spirit, reckons up many that are not common to all, or that are extraordinary gifts? Because *St. Paul* reckoning up to the *Corinthians* some of the operations of the Holy Spirit, for the most part names such as are extraordinary, they conclude they are all such, and consequently that also of which he says, *That none can say that Jesus is the Lord but by the Holy Ghost*. But what will they say of the gift of Charity, whereof *St. Paul* speaks a little after, and prefers before all the other? Is this too an extraordinary gift, peculiar only to the Apostles? Or if common to all the Faithful, does it therefore cease to be the gift and work of the Holy Ghost? And if all the Faithful make but one Body animated by the Holy Ghost, whereof they are all Members, do they call this reasoning, to say, because such and such less eminent Members have not receiv'd of the Spirit the gifts proper to the Eye, to the Tongue, to the Hands or Feet, therefore they do not partake of the operations of Life and Motion, and of the immediate guidance of the Holy Spirit.

XVI. A
Passage
in *St.*
Paul.

1 *Cor.*
12. 4.
&c.

ibid v. 3.
ch. 13.
v. 1. &c.

XVII. Suppose *St. Paul* to preserve his Disciples in Humility, had said upon occasion of his own and others extraordinary gifts, what he does in these two

XVII.
Two o-
ther Pas-
sages of
the same *Apostle*.

Passages;

Chap.
1.
2 Cor.
3. 5.
Phil. 2.
13.

Passage; in the one, *We are not sufficient of our selves as of our selves to think a good Thought, but our sufficiency is of God*; in the other, *It is God that makes us to will and to do of his good pleasure*. Supposing this, I say (but not granting it, especially as to the last Passage) does it hence follow, that it is only with respect to extraordinary gifts, that we are not sufficient to have a good Thought as of our selves? That it is in this only that God is our sufficiency? That it is only in miraculous and special gifts that God produces in us both to will and to do? And that this is what St. Paul means? Assuredly, the desire of opposing the Light of the Holy Spirit blinds Man's Heart to that degree as to make him forget his Worldly Learning and his Logick.

Children are Taught, that when we would maintain the Truth of any particular Proposition, it must be done by applying to this particular one, some other Proposition of a more general Truth; and this is what they call the generality of the major Proposition. St. Paul (to handle this matter according to the Palate and Hypothesis of the natural Man) is proving that we ought not to be Proud of, but rather humble our selves upon the account of extraordinary gifts, and walk before God with Fear and Trembling: This is the Proposition he undertakes to prove: And those he would prove it by are these that follow: For, says he, *We are not sufficient of our selves to think a good Thought as of ourselves: Our sufficiency is of God. For 'tis he that worketh in us both to will and to do according to his good pleasure*. Now I ask, where is the common Sense, to conclude from this, that these major Propositions, *We are not sufficient of our selves to think any thing that is good; our sufficiency is of God; 'tis he that Works in us both to will and to do according to his pleasure*, are not true but with relation to extraordinary gifts, nor applicable to any other? Ought we not rather to conclude the contrary, and to say, that these Propositions are of universal Truth, as to Things of the same order, that is, as to all Things relating to the Salvation and Conduct of the Children of God, in short, as to all saving goods, realities and perfections.

Chap.
I.

To imagine otherwise, is not only to forget the rules of right Reasoning, but to make the Apostle contradict himself, and overthrow his own design. For had the Apostle meant to apply these Propositions only to extraordinary gifts, he would have tacitly granted, that the ordinary gifts, which were to be common to all true Christians, divine Charity, Faith and Hope, are gifts to which we are sufficient of our selves without God, and that God does not operate them in us. And if so, would have given occasion both to himself and his Disciples of a Pride so much the more Diabolical and Extravagant as it is certain that the gifts of Faith, Hope and Charity are infinitely in reality, worth and all other respects, beyond the most miraculous and extraordinary Operations. If therefore it would have been a piece of Diabolical Pride to think themselves sufficient of themselves, without the Operation of the Holy Ghost to Preach after an extraordinary manner, the Mysteries of Salvation, to do Miracles, to speak with Tongues, and to think it was not necessary that God should work in St. Paul and his Disciples, both the willing and the doing of these Things; much more is it *Luciferian* Pride to fancy themselves sufficient as of themselves, without the Operation of the Holy Ghost, to have the great and incomparably more real and valuable gifts of Charity and Faith, without God's needing to produce in them the willing and the doing.

XVIII. I said, it was not to be granted that St. Paul in that Passage to the *Philippians* speaks of extraordinary and miraculous gifts: Do but read the whole Epistle, and you will find he speaks not one Word of them; nor was it St. Paul's intent to exhort Men to exercise with Humility the extraordinary gifts of Miracles, Healing, Prophecy and Tongues. It appears from the whole Epistle, that there were among the *Philippians*, some false Brethren who endeavourd to oppose and vex St. Paul; that had a mind to corrupt the Purity of his Doctrine, by mixing with it *Jewish* Ceremonies; and that sought their own interest and glory. For that was the spring of all their Actions. To humour the *Jews*, and to avoid Persecution upon the account of the Gospel, they stuck to many of the *Jewish*

XVIII.
St. Paul does not in these Passages speak of extraordinary and miraculous but of saving gifts.

Chap.

I.

W

ish Rites; and to please Christians, they imitated St. Paul as to his ordinary way of Preaching. And being sensible that the Apostle knew their Hypocrisy, they did all they could to provoke and grieve him, to raise Contentions among the Brethren, and to set them against him, as well as against one another. And upon this the Apostle shews the *Philippians*, that to escape the snares of these Deceivers, they ought to continue stedfast to him, and in unity with one another, and rather suffer then comply with the loose Principles of those false Brethren, since Patience was as well a gift of the Holy Ghost as Faith in Christ, which he had already been graciously pleas'd to give them; that therefore they should be of one Heart, and one Mind, peaceable, humble, not seeking vain-glory, and their own honour, for as much as all that saving good we either will or do, comes from God, and 'tis he that works it in us: With which we ought humbly to co-operate by constantly keeping our selves in a disposition to receive it, and not by giving way to Obstacles, to hinder our own co-operating and the divine working in us, such as Pride, Presumption and the like would certainly be, yet of them all can none be said to be so fatal and destructive, as the Presumption to think to attain Salvation without the internal Operation of the Holy Ghost. This is directly to reject the Salvation of God.

XIX. Of
a Passage
of St.
Peter.

Acts 2.
38.

XIX. There are many more places which are by them perverted purposely to hide from their corrupt Nature the Obligation it lyes under of renouncing itself, and of dying to fit itself for the reception of the Holy Ghost. This painful preparation being a Hell to our self-love, that would gladly shift it off; you may imagine Men will be ever trying their skill to make the receiving of the Holy Ghost by Christians in general to pass for a vain Dream, and by the Apostles for miraculous gifts only. And thus they deal with this Passage of St. Peter, *Repent and be Baptised every one of you, in the Name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of Sins, and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.* Saying, this is to be understood of the miraculous gifts that God bestow'd on the Apostles and the Faithful of the Primitive Church; otherwise, if by the Holy Ghost were

Chap.

I.

were to be understood the Grace of Sanctification, this Discourse of St. Peter's would be meer trifling; the exacting Sanctification in his Hearers, as a requisite to their receiving it afterwards; which is what they take to be absurd.

But this pitiful evasion of theirs is much more so. First, Our Saviour is of another mind. For in the place but lately quoted of the 7th of St. John, he promises the Spirit not to the Apostles only, nor to the Faithful of the Primitive Church alone; but to all that should believe in him; 'tis to all believers that he promises the gift of the Spirit which should make their Hearts Springs of living Water.

Secondly, To make St. Peter promise miraculous gifts to all that should Repent, is to make him say what is false; it being evident that these gifts were not common to all the Believers of the Primitive Church; and that such as had them were look'd upon as Persons priviledg'd above the rest.

In the Third place, 'tis pure Ignorance of what Sanctification is, to say that St. Peter requir'd it as a necessary qualification in those that were afterwards to receive it. This Word being ambiguous and not express'd in the Text, I shall explain the strength of what St. Peter there urges, without making use of that Term. Let us say then, that St. Peter requires of them, that they cause all the acts of their old Man that is alive in their Hearts to cease, and that then God will cause the inward Principles of this Criminal Life to cease also; that they would cease to produce evil Fruits, and God would dry up the evil Root and plant a good one in them: That they would empty themselves of evil, and God would fill them with good; that upon their complying with those measures of Grace God had already bestow'd on them, he would still give them more and more, and infinitely greater; that they would according to the strength God had already given them cease from evil and do good; and then God would by Additions of new strength, enable them to do what as yet they could not; that they would bring to God a Sanctification, if I may be allow'd so to word it, of abstaining and ceasing from Evil, from its acts and fruits to the best of their Power, and God will give them the living and inward Principle of a Sanctification, that is universal,

Chap. 1. habitual, radical and productive of good. Is not the Scripture full of such exhortations as these? God there promises a new Heart, and at the same time bids them make themselves new Hearts; and not to recede from St. Peter's terms, does not Wisdom, by the Mouth of Solomon say, *Turn ye at my reproof, and I will plentifully pour out my Spirit upon you.* Does she here intend miraculous gifts? And are these the gifts she exhorts Sinners to acquire that they may avoid eternal Death, she so vehemently threatens them with? They that read the Chapter must needs doat if they think so.

XX. That it highly concerns us to know and avoid this Heresy.

XX. How much better would it be to Pray Night and Day to the Holy Spirit, that he would be pleas'd to discover to us the fearful darkness and infinite corruption of our Heart, and shew us too some glimpse of the divine and shining Treasures he pours out into the Hearts he dwells in, then to employ our time in making our selves insensible of our Ignorance and Misery, and in persuading our selves we may do very well without this Holy Spirit! What good will it do us to obtain of our desperately deceitful Heart, this false and flattering Testimony, *I am rich and abound, and want for nothing*; if we must one Day, and that too late, be forced to hear the terrible Voice of Truth, thundring in our Ears, *Thou art Wretched, and Miserable, and Poor, and Blind, and Naked*? And how is it possible to escape this woful state, as long as Men think they may and shall do well enough without the Holy Spirit, who says, *I counsel thee to buy of me Gold try'd in the Fire, that thou mayest be rich, and white Rayment that thou mayest be Cloath'd, and that thy shameful Nakedness may not appear; and Eye-salve to anoint thine Eyes that thou mayest see. He that hath Ears to hear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the Churches.*

Rev. 3. 17, 18.

For my part I chuse rather to hear this Divine Spirit, than the Spirit of Error, and joining my Desires with those of the Ancient Christians, shall with them beg of him all the Dispositions of Mind and Heart, that we must necessarily have to please God.

O Lux Beatissima,
Reple cordis intima,
Tuorum Fidelium!

*Sine tuo Numine
Nihil est in homine,
Nihil est innoxium.*

*Lava quod est sordidum,
Riga quod est aridum,
Sana quod est sancinum.*

*Flecte quod est rigidum,
Fove quod est frigidum,
Rege quod est devium.*

What has been said I think is enough to destroy the Heresy of Pelagius, and to take away all suspicion of my being tainted with it. I might very well have fallen into it formerly, if God before he prevented me with his Grace, had not remov'd out of my way all occasions of reading and studying the wicked Books that contain it. I was much inclin'd that way through the too great esteem I had for Human Reason, or the Idolatry I was guilty of by my excess in that point: But God (for ever Blessed be his Holy Name for it!) has so effectually turn'd me away from it, that there is nothing I abhor more than this abominable Heresy: I had rather be in Hell without it, than with it in Paradise; as being fully assured, that without it I might still retain God working in my Heart, tho' I were in Hell, and that would be my Paradise; whereas if with it I were in Paradise, I should infallibly be thrown out of it as the Devils were, tho' I were a Cherubim or Seraphim. This Heresy is more hateful than the Devil, who cannot of himself hurt or damp us, tho' he possess'd our Bodies, as this Heresy does infallibly damn the Soul of those it possesseth at their Death. I wish all Creatures may detest and curse it, and that none may think of it with less Horror than I do, that cannot but tremble and quake at the Thoughts of it, to sure am I of its execrable Nature. O God, how sad and deplorable is it, to see Men reap no other Fruit from all their Studies, to see their Learning teach them only how to damn themselves, while they labour to infuse into Men a deadly Poyson that will certainly damn both Soul and Body of all that swallow it! God grant they may rescue themselves out of the

Chap.
II.

Snares of the Devil, wherein they are caught to do his will!

CHAP. II.

Of Man's Co-operation with God's Grace,
that it is free, true, but not prevent-
ing, &c.

I. The
Second
Error, to
ascribe
the whole
action to
God, and
nothing
to the
Creature.



THE other Error to be avoided is op-
posite to this, and if it be not more
is certainly little less destructive. And
'tis theirs who think God does all, and
the Creature can neither act nor
operate at all. And by consequence,
ought not so much as to endeavour it. *Pelagianism* is a sort
of Atheism and denial of God: And this other Error a
sort of Idolatry, that takes every thing for God, confound-
ing God with the Creature. There is Creator and there is
Creature; and likewise actions of the Creator and actions
of the Creature. The same Creator that gave Being to what
had it not, gave also the Power of acting or activity
to that which before had it not: And this activity, as
well of the Liberty as of the other Faculties, must con-
tribute its act from its own stock towards its Salvati-
on, that Happiness may be the result of both the Ope-
ration of God and Man. I make no doubt, were not
Men fondly wedded to the prejudices of a kind of ex-
travagant and fantastical Metaphysics, it would
be impossible, upon consulting their own Heart in the
presence of God, or reading but one single Page in the
Scriptures, for them not to be convinc'd of this
Truth.

Some finding it hard to distinguish the Operation of
God from that of Man, and fearing to be mistaken in
assigning to each their proper part, had rather make
short work of it, and ascribe all to one and nothing to
the other. The *Pelagians* ascribe all to Man, and the
other

Chap.

I.

other all to God! But you, say they, that are for ascribing part to God and part to the Creature, don't you revive the Error they call Semi-Pelagianism, which has been so strenuously oppos'd by so many great Men, particularly by St. Prosper, whose Poem *de Ingratis* was directly levell'd against it?

II. I am not concern'd in all the Doctrines of those they call Semi-Pelagians; but if we consider the Principal one, commonly laid to their charge, that Man is free to receive or reject the Grace of God, we shall find this Truth has been so far from passing for an Error among all the great Men, that on the contrary, as I have shewn in the first Treatise, * St. Prudentius, who was not at all inferior to St. Prosper, either in Ability, Orthodoxy, Holiness or true Humility, is clearly for it, and as clearly proves it; and were it necessary, it might easily be made appear that almost all the Ancient Fathers and Doctors were fully perswaded of this Truth, which never wanted considerable Persons to defend it, which yet wou'd not have been the less true though it had. The so much cry'd up Poem of St. Prosper, to speak truth (bating the three first Chapters of the first Book where he confutes the Heresy of Pelagius, tho' superficially enough) has so little of Argument in it, that it plainly discovers what a poor Disputant St. Prosper was. 'Tis a meer confus'd heap of instances, nothing to the purpose, that beats the Air only, never touching the Doctrine he pretends to strike at, and contains almost as many paralogisms as Verses, if his design be to prove that Man has not the liberty to admit or refuse God's Grace.

II. That it was unadvisedly done of St. Prosper to run down the Creatures Co-operating by their liberty and activity. * Economy of the Creation. c. 16. p. 19.

III. Nor has he had better success in falling foul on the 13th of the great *Cassian* divine Conferences that have been so highly esteem'd by so many that were truly wise and holy. Yet have they barely upon his Authority been so vilely traduc'd and look'd upon as so full of Errors and Heresies, that Mr. Arnaud d'Andilly, who had given order to have them purged of those imaginary Faults, and join'd to the Lives of the Fathers of the Deserts, was answered by the Castrator that it was a thing impossible to be done, they were so full of Errors; and so it was none of St. Prosper's Fault that the publick was not depriv'd of a work incomparably more edifying.

III. Prosper's mistaken heat against the 13th of Cassian an Conference.

Chap.
II.

edifying than any of his. 'Tis true they have by another Hand been Translated and Printed in the vulgar Tongue, but there the 13th Conference is left out, and some alterations made in the other, to comply with St. *Prosper's* Censure, and those that approv'd it. Were there then really any Heresies or Errors in that 13th Conference? No; but the Truth is St. *Prosper* did not understand it.

The holy Anchorer that discours'd with *Cassian*, and his Companion tells them (to the best of my remembrance, it being now some Years ago since I read that Conference) that God often leaves Men, and even Saints too, without his Grace, to try their strength, and that then the Saints must strive, fight and conquer, and that they do so, as *Job* did, without the Assistance of this Divine Grace, and the like. *Prosper* did not apprehend that this was meant of the Grace of Sensation and of the encrease of preventing Grace, which in Truth God does not always give to his Saints, nor are they always to expect it, since *Christ* himself complains he was forsaken of it, and there is nothing more familiar in the *Psalms* than the Psalmist's complaints of his being forsaken of God, that God hid his Face from him, that he was withdrawn and had absented himself from him; and in the *Canticles* 'tis said, that he was fled away, and yet the Soul all that while continued faithful to her God. And is not this to complain for the absence of God's Grace, seeing for certain the sensible Presence and encrease of these things are very signal Graces of God? And is this what they make Heresy of, and is it for this they make an holy and excellent Book and Persons suspected? And what is more Orthodox than to suppose that God, who always dwells and Operates in Souls resign'd to him, does it often insensibly, and often only by way of tacit Correspondence, without preventing them by new Graces, and augmenting those they have, to try if without any sensible Perceptions (which may give hold to self-love) and new Prevention, their correspondence to the Graces they have already, and which never leaves them, will be strong and faithful? To see if his Grace has already produced any strength and solid Fruit, that can subsist without any sensibility or new support?

The

Chap.
II.

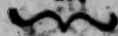
The design of *Cassian*, and the holy Anchoret that is discoursing with him, was to destroy this pernicious Error; of more fatal consequence than can well be imagin'd; namely, "That to our beginning or continuing any good work, it is necessary that we sit still and wait till God awaken and move us by preventing sensible and extraordinary Graces, and such as exceed the measures of our former correspondence. This is the state and sense of the Question before them; and the result of what they say upon it is, that God indeed at first does so, but that after the first Lights and Motions he requires our correspondence, and that upon many occasions, without giving any new preventing Grace, and even when he withdraws all sensible Graces; but they do not say that God ever withdraws the Grace of his inward Presence, which secretly assists our faithful Endeavours; his goodness and justice will not suffer him to do so; much less does he require the Saints shou'd fight without it. This was never *Cassian's* Thought; neither he nor the holy Anchoret *Cheremon* ever believed that the Holy Spirit forsook the Soul of Saints, and obliged them to fight and do good without him and without the Grace of his adorable Presence, often indeed still and quiet in the bottom of the Heart; and this is what *St. Prosper* does not sufficiently distinguish; and then setting out an airy Phantom of his own, pretending *Cassian* taught there was no need of God's Grace, he chafes and wonderfully lays about him to destroy this and the rest of his imaginary Semipelagian Monsters, little thinking what an easy matter it was with one word or two to put by all his stabbing Passes.

IV. For to what purpose is it to object to these last with all that noise, *That Man has nothing but what he has received, that all Vertues are the Gifts of Grace*, and are not from our selves; *Quæ nisi donata essent nobis non invenirentur in nobis?* Who doubts it? But may not Man for all this, have an habitual Grace in him, which he formerly receiv'd of God, but of which he does not then give him the sensible Perception, nor actually strengthen him by new Reinforcements; so that such a one will have at that time strength to act virtuously without any new and special gift of God? And how does this Truth, *That all true goods are the Gifts of God*, clash

IV. The weakness of what *Prosper* urges against his pretended Semi-Pelagians.

Chap.

II.



clash with this other, that Man has the liberty either to take or refuse them? and if he do take them, why are they not still as much free Gifts as before? If I give a Treasure to one reduc'd to Poverty, does it cease to be a free Gift because he I give it to may chuse whether he will accept of it or no? Why must the act of the liberty be confounded with the thing given? It is never said in Scripture that the determination of the liberty is not of Man; but only that the good received by the liberty is not of Man, who nevertheless has the Power to give or refuse his consent, that being a faculty God has endow'd his Nature with. But this was what St. *Prosper* and others, that were as confused in their Conceptions, were not able to comprehend, and for that reason all their Objections are nothing to the purpose. I thought it convenient to take this in my way and insist a little more particularly upon it, that none may hereafter, to the Prejudice of Truth, alledge the Authority of one, subject to such mistakes, though otherwise a zealous Partizan for the Grace of God, but with a Zeal wanting Knowledge.

V. 'Tis a pernicious Error to deny the Activity of Creatures.

V. The Error that ascribes all activity to God and leaves none to the Creature, may pass for a true Heresy, as naturally leading to sloth and negligence, rendring the Seat of God's Love, (I mean the liberty, the desires and the inward Endeavours of the Soul) improper and unfit to receive God, and as being directly contrary to the Scriptures, that so frequently exhort us to Action and Operation, and making our Duty to consist in so doing.

VI. The main but constant and bread-bare Objection to this, is beside the purpos, and ridiculous.

VI. But it looks so speciously to say in general, that God is the cause of all reality, that he is the sole and only active Principle; that he only has any Power; that 'tis Pride, Self love, and even Sacrilege for a Creature to pretend to such a Prerogative, with a deal more said with the same Air of confidence, that one can hardly forbear thinking them in the right, and that no Truth can stand upon a firmer bottom than the conclusions they draw from these Principles; especially when we see all this come gilded with the fair shew of asserting God's Glory, under pretence of which tis common to see Men pressing their own silly, but to others very troublesome and disquieting, Opinions as Points of Religion,

Chap.
II.

ligion, which otherwise wou'd have no manner of difficulty in them. For what hard matter is it to conceive, that tho' a Creature be nothing of it self as to Being and Activity, yet that it may be able to do what God pleases it should be, and be able to do; since this is what the Omnipotent Will of God cannot want Power to effect, and since it is his Will that there be things besides himself that shall lively represent him, that is to say, real subjects, formally Possessing Being and Activity? Where lies the Pride in pretending to have something by the Gift of God? in pretending to possess what we really do by his absolute Donation and Grant? Wou'd it not rather be a more subtle and hidden kind of Pride to deny we have any Activity of our own, that so we may make all our Motions Divine, and consequently our disorderly ones too? But I am unwilling to press this thought with all the impiety it leads too. The truth is, self-love finds it for its Interest to persuade itself that it acts not by its own Motions, but God's; that 'tis God only that acts in it, that all our Actions are things purely divine, or flowing from God only, and a hundred such like illusions and foolish Fancies.

VII. 'Tis true (and I have already prevented that difficulty, but we cannot be too much upon our guard against the false consequences Men go about to load the Truth with) 'tis true, I say that it would be a great Error to imagine that the Action or Operation of the Creature is an Operation absolutely independent, as if Man were the first cause of it, and as if he had not received the Principle of it from God, whereas he is only the second cause of it, depending on the first, which is God. It would likewise be an Error, and that a very pernicious one, to think that it were of itself sufficient (I mean the Operation of Man) that is to say, that it were Illuminating, and the Fountain of Blessedness, or that it could produce Light and Joy. These are things we must not confound together. The one is proper to God alone, the other communicable and communicated to the Creature. Let us therefore distinguish them.

VIII. Man of himself has neither being nor activity: but by God's Donation he is become a Being, an Active Being, and is not so being, but is so by the Grace of God.

VII. The
Operation of the
Creature
not to be
confound-
ed with
God's.

VIII.
Man is
not so be-
ing, but is so by
the Grace of God.

Being,

Chap.
II.

*Oeconomy of the
Creation,*
c. xvii.

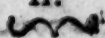
IX. Sub-
stantial
Light
and Joy
not in
the Crea-
tures
Power to
effect, but
only re-
ceive, nor
that but
upon
three Con-
ditions.

Being, and a freely acting Being. As his Being shall never be taken from him, so neither shall the Activity of his Faculties, nor that of his Liberty be ever taken from him in whatever state he be, no not in the very state of Damnation. Much less are we to think he does not act by them when the Question is about his entering into a state of Grace: The one, are the subject and matter which Grace invests, the Vessel into which it is to be poured and received; the other, as it were the Door by which Grace enters into the Soul. If Man were a Nothing he would be incapable of receiving any good from God. If he were something, but a something merely Passive, and without Activity, he could receive only material and brute goods. The living and infinite Graces of God suppose a Subject living, acting and willing, after a free and infinite manner to admit and enjoy them infinitely and deliciously. We should do well here to remember the Reasons elsewhere given why Man was endued with Liberty, and thence observe, how true it is, that without the Activity of our Liberty (to say nothing of that of the desire) the Soul would be incapable of the true Delights of God, and therefore an improper subject of God's Grace.

IX. To reduce into some order what I shall say of Man's Operation and his Co-operation with God, it must be observed, that as there are in Man different Faculties, so there are likewise different Operations, which do not all concur after the same manner in the business before us. I shall say nothing of corporeal Operations, they having no immediate relation to Grace. The Question is only of the Operations, first of the Liberty, and then of the Desires; and in the last Place, of those of the Understanding and Acquiescence or Joy. These two last, of the Understanding and Joy, being altogether Passive in the matter of Grace, I shall observe this one thing concerning them, which is, that suppose Man in what state you will, either of Innocence, Sin, Recovery, or Glory, 'tis impossible his Understanding shou'd work up that Light as will answer its capacity, and his Heart produce its own solid Joy and Peace. This is the work of God alone; and to speak Truth, this Light, this Good, this substantial Joy and Tranquility, is God himself. How then is it possible they

they should be produced by the Creatures Understanding and Heart? All they can do is to give them admission, supposing three Conditions: First, That God offer them to them; Secondly, that the Desire be mov'd and turn'd towards them; and Thirdly, That the liberty give its consent to them. So that all at last come to the Operation of God, and the Co-operation of the Desire, and of the Liberty.

Chap.
II.



X. God does without all doubt work in Man's Conversion: This is what we have seen at large in the precedent Chapter, the only Question is, Whether this Operation of God be preventing, and if so, whether it be equally both as to the Liberty and the Desire, or only as to one of them; Lastly, what is the Operation of the Liberty and the Desire in this Affair.

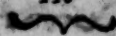
X. The
state of
the Question.

XI. The Operation of God must without all question precede that of the Creature; for let us consider Man in his fallen State, as filling his Faculties with vain Objects and dark Sensations, turning his evil Acts into evil Habits, as disuniting himself from God, making himself insensible of him, and loosing him, multiplying the Obstacles that separate him from him; and that God on the other side suffers him to go on, and no more makes himself sensible and present to him by his Grace; in this state, I say 'tis impossible that Man should first work any thing in order to his Salvation, not so much as give admission to the light and the good, for having lost them, they are no longer, without Grace, present to him. Nor can he so much as desire them; because he is grown insensible of them; and his liberty, whatever Motions it may give him, cannot give him good ones, or move him to good; for there is no good in him, nothing but Darkness and Pollution. Suppose a free Agent moves, a Thousand different ways, a Vessel filled with Dung, whatever motions his liberty may give it, he can make no good or sweet smell come out of it; on the contrary, the more it is stir'd the more it will stink; just thus it is with the Vessel of our Soul and all our Faculties after sin, and before the Operation of God's Grace; the more our liberty stirs them, the more it encreases their stink, and their filth too. And this is one of the main Reasons why the Devil and the Damned can never be converted nor saved,

XI. That
God's Operation
must precede
Man's,
that before
Grace
Man can
have no
good Motion.

not-

Chap.
II.



XII.
That God
does not
prevent
Man by
acting di-
rectly and
physically
upon his
Liberty.

notwithstanding their liberty ; because they can by it only encrease their Evils, unless God prevent them with his Operation, which is what God will never do more, he having already done it a sufficient time, and found them so resolutely fix'd in their wickedness as to refuse to correspond to his Divine Operations.

XIII.

XIII.
That 'tis
a Con-
tradiction
to say
God phy-
sically
acts and
deter-
mines the
Liberty.

XII. God then must begin first to work ; but where does his Operation terminate ? Upon what does he act ? What is it he moves ? What does he make an Impression upon ? I say 'tis not upon the Liberty ; but upon the other Faculties ; upon the desire, by good Motions ; upon the intellect by Lights not indeed as yet abiding and unitive, but only transient, and by these it is that he graciously seeks and courts the liberty to resign itself up to him. Thus does he prevent the liberty, indirectly, by the mediation of the other Faculties ; and morally, by the Allurements of his Love ; but he acts neither in it nor upon it Physically ; he does not impress on it the first Motion it ought to have. 'Tis certain the liberty must here act for itself, from a Principle of its own, and of its own accord and determination, and must surrender itself to God's call and invitation before he take it to himself.

XIII. 'Twould be contradiction to think God did after such a preventing and insinuating manner act in the liberty, that it must infallibly be determined which way God would have it, and that without such an impression of God it would neither have gone that way, nor so far. For the very Essence of Liberty consists in this, that it be a Principle determin'd by nothing but itself, or that it determine itself by its own proper acts. Otherwise, it would be incapable of meriting or demeriting, and a Principle purely passive and not free. For were it true that the Liberty in matters in question, cou'd not act without being mov'd, and being mov'd did act infallibly, and could not but act (*in sensu composito*) and could act no further, supposing it mov'd no further, and that it had no Power to act any further unless God please to move it further, 'tis plain then that the Liberty, as to the exertion of its acts, would be a thing meerly Brute, Mechanical, and not free, incapable of Vertue or Vice, of Laws and Commandments, Exhortations and Prohibitions, of Promises and Threatnings, of Rewards and Punishments ;

ments; in a word, of being divinely Good, or diabolically Wicked, of the Joys of Heaven or the Torments of Hell. All the fine Discourses and big words of some Men of Learning, that rack their Brains to persuade us to the contrary, will never do it. All they say is but very intricate and perplex'd, so winding and doubling Inconsistency and Ambiguity, not worth while to be unravelled and unfolded, and exposing any one that is not so simple as to think that long and fine Harangues turn the Truth into a Lye, or White into Black. Mens understandings must certainly run very low with these sort of People, that have the face so confidently to give out that Man is free, and that yet he does not act, but is infallibly and determinately acted by another in the Motions and Determinations of his Liberty. It's strange to me these odd casts they give of their skill, don't make the World out of Conceit both with the Learned and their Studies, when after all their toil and sweat they come at last to this rare Conclusion, as foolish *Spinosa* did, that Man has no Power to determine himself of his own accord, and yet that he is free. How does this hang together?

XIV. But in the manner you talk of Liberty, will some say, you make it Mistress, and the Grace of God Servant; you subject the Grace and Operation of God to the Creature. And this looks frightfully. (Other Objections I shall pass by here, having elsewhere sufficiently spoken to them.) These Metaphorical Terms of Mistress and Servant serve only to cast a Mist before Mens Minds. I am free to go to *Rome*, and if I get thither it must be by my own Choice and Motion; and is this to say I am Master of *Rome*, and that *Rome* is my Servant? There are several sorts of Subjections; and in a certain Sense it is very true that God subjects his Grace to Man. There is a subjection of Dignity and Perfection, by which the thing subject is Inferiour to another, and less worthy than that to which it is subject. In this Sense the Grace of God is not in the least subjected to Man. There is another subjection meerly passive, both in its rise and course, when a thing has been as it were conquered, and receives the Rules of all its Actions from a Superiour. There is a subjection of Nature and Dependance, as when an effect

XIV. In what Sense the Grace of God is not submitted to Man, and in what Sense it may be said to be so.

Chap.
II.

is subject to its cause. There is a subjection of Necessity, as when Men are subject to the necessities of eating and drinking. It is in none of all these Senses that the Operation or Grace of God is subject to the liberty of Man. Lastly, there is an arbitrary and generous subjection, a subjection of Love and Charity, in which we freely place ourselves purely out of kindness to the thing whose good we seek, so far submitting ourselves to its Discretion. Thus has God in an hundred instances submitted himself to Men by Leagues Covenants, and Promises, by which he obliges himself to do such and such things as Man shall desire of him.

After this manner it is that God having made a Creature free, was pleased to submit himself to it so far, that the Reception of himself, of his Grace and Operation should be at the choice of this Creature. I do not by this say, That the Nature, Power, Dignity, Perfection and Rules of Grace are effects depending on Man and Inferiour to him; but that the admission of this Grace by Man is left wholly to his choice. Now whether it be received or not, the thing tendered becomes thereby never the less perfect, worthy, happy or compleat, it fails of nothing by this, no not so much as of the Execution of its Design; because it never intended to be received by constraint or physically, but freely and of choice. And if this be subjection, we grant it; and a great deal more too, God having really made himself Men's Servant, submitted himself to their Service, and made his Angels serve them, and sent his Apostles to beg 'em as from him to please to accept the Grace he offers them; *We are Ambassadors*, says St. Paul, *from Christ, as if God did beseech you by us: We pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God.* To that Degree does God subject to Man his Grace of Reconciliation. And again, in another place, he says, *I beseech you that you receive not the Grace of God in vain.* None, as I know of, was ever offended at these words of the pious a Kempis. *Ecce omnia tua sunt quae habeo & unde tibi servio. Verum tamen, vice versa, tu magis mihi servis quam ego tibi. Ecce calum & terra quae in ministerium hominis creasti, presto sunt & faciunt quotidie quaecunque mandasti. Et hoc parum est, quinetiam Angelos in ministerium hominis ordinasti. Transcendis autem*

1 Cor.
5. 21.

Ibid. 6.
v. 1.

De Imit.
Christ,
lib. 3.
cap. 10.

autem hac omnia quia Tu ipse homini Servire dignatus es, & Teipsum ei daturum promissisti : By which words this highly spiritual Person owns God is more our Servant than we are his, he really and in truth doing us infinitely more service, than we do him. *Christ* does not stick to represent himself as knocking at our Door, and waiting to see if we will open to him. Therefore it is nothing unbecoming the Grace of God to say that he submits itself to Man's liberty so far and in such a Sense as we say he does.

Chap.
II.

Rev. 3.
20.

XV. But what, is God's Action there incomparable with the liberty? Cannot the liberty receive in it the happiness to see God operating in it, and to see itself mov'd by him? That is what I do not say; on the contrary, I acknowledge it as an important Truth, that God governs and determines the Liberty of those that are wholly resigned to him. But what is this to the present Question? We are now considering Man as convertible only, and before he has given himself up to God. And it is true of the Liberty of such a one, that it must of itself and from its own innate Power determine itself to give up itself to God. But when that is done, God in consequence of this determination made by the liberty when it gives up itself to him of its own accord and power, accepts it and acts it, governs and determines it without any violation of the freedom of its Nature; for first, this action of God is justly esteem'd the Liberties own, forasmuch as the Liberty has of its own choice taken and chosen it for its own; and so this divine Determination is always grounded on an act truly free, and springing from the root of the Souls Liberty. In the second place, the action of God by which he governs the Liberty that is resigned to him, is never without the concurrence of the act of that same Liberty, that is to say without its consent, which is a continual Ratification of the first act by which it gave up itself to God. The Creatures Liberty does as it were constitute God its Proxy, to act in its stead; which is what God out of his great Charity is willing to undertake and execute as long as the Soul by her consent continues the Commission, and no longer.

XV. That God truly acts in the liberty, but when it determines and gives up itself to him, and is willing to be determin'd by him, and not otherwise

And all this is what very well agrees with the Nature of the Liberty, and with God's Design in creating it

Chap.
II.



and giving the Government and Determination of itself absolutely into its own hands. And this is so far from hindering God to act in the Liberty, if it be willing he should, that on the contrary, if the liberty could not will to give up itself to God, or if upon its willing it God did not accept it nor act in it to determine and govern it, it would thence follow that the Liberty was bounded and vain, and that God disapproved its very best use, and rejected the highest Expression of its Homage. God then does act upon the Liberty truly and efficaciously (to use a word that has rais'd such squabbling in the World) but the Liberty must freely determine itself before he will thus act in it.

XVI.
*God's
first operations
are not
upon the
liberty,
but the
other Faculties.*

XVI. And yet I prov'd but now that God's Operation must of necessity precede the Creatures. But by this I don't say, that God's preventing Operation must begin by acting upon the Liberty. There are other Faculties in the Soul, as the Desire, Intellect, and the rest. God may begin by acting upon them; and the Liberty, which is united to them, may incline and consent thereto, and by that means, give God some hold to act afterwards upon itself. And this is indeed the Truth of the matter. And so the stress of the business falls again upon the Operation of God in the Desire; for instance, for to avoid troubling ourselves with a multitude of Faculties, we shall single out this leading one, to shew how God works in the Soul, and the Soul works together with God.

XVII.
*Confusion
that has
darkned
it is sub-
ject, to
be shun'd.*

XVII. And in pursuance of this, 'twill be necessary to give some distinct notions of the different things that are to be consider'd in the desire, else we shall but obscure this as we generally do other Points. The confusion wherein many have left the Faculties of the Soul, and the various things in every one of them which ought to be distinguish'd, has cast such a cloud on all that has hitherto been written of Spiritual things; but more especially on our present Subject of Grace, its operation, and Man's Conversion, which most by their endeavours to clear, have but the more darken'd, and this is what no Man of honesty I believe can deny. We will try therefore to propose the Truth in a more simple and less confused manner.

XVIII.

XVIII. I shall not give the definition of desire; every one sufficiently feels within himself what it is, to enable him by that experimental knowledge, as confuse as it is, to apprehend what I am going to say.

The desire is not a Faculty only active, but passive also. These are two properties of it we should no more confound then question. The constitution of the Nature of our Soul, which to attain the end God created it for, wants to be filled with realities that are not yet in it, makes it from the Sense of its emptiness and want, produce acts of Aspiration, of Intraction and Efforts, this every one has Proofs enough of by what passes within him. Thus we see how the desire acts out of a sense of its natural emptiness.

The same Faculty of desire is Passive when the Objects of the Soul, good or ill, approach it, strike and pierce it and are perceiv'd by it, these Objects excite, produce and augment the actual desires in the Soul, which we may call *Passive* ones, and they are quick and moving according to the spirituality and force of the Objects, and the vigor or languidness of the Impressions they make upon the sensibility of the Soul. Objects of good raise Desires of *Union*; evil ones of *Separation*, that is to say, wills and averfions, which the Schools express very well by the Terms *Noluntas & voluntas*.

It must moreover be observed, that the desire as active, is, either general, uncertain and undeterminate; or fix'd by the Soul upon some particular Objects, and in such and such a manner. The desire as passive, might be distributed into Divisions something like these; but it is not necessary to be so particular here, because the passive Desire is no Operation of the Soul, but of the Objects that strike upon it. Of this I think there can be no doubt made.

XIX. After these Reflections on the nature of the desire, we are to consider the natural State of it since the Fall, and before the Operation of God's Grace; then the Operation of God, and lastly the Souls corresponding: All this in order.

fore God's Grace. That of itself it can have no good Motion.

Chap.

II.

(a) §. 11.

XX. That
all the
desires of
a sinner,
general
and par-
ticular
are cor-
rupt and
dark-
naught.

We have seen but now, (a) that the Liberty could give no good to the desire, supposing there were none in the Soul, and that none were offer'd to it by God's Grace. The same may be said of the desire, as to any ability of its own. After its losing God by turning away from him, and corrupting its Nature by disorderly acts and ill habits, it can no more produce any good acts, so far is it from being able to produce in itself the true Light and Good.

XX. For altho' it be commonly said, that it is natural and essential to the Soul to desire good in general, and tho' that be true, yet is not this desire for all that a good act; to desire good and to desire well, are very different Things: The desire even of good may be evil, when 'tis desir'd either from an ill Principle, for an ill end, or after an ill manner. Now the indeterminate and general desire of good is always in some sort or other corrupted in corrupt Minds, as are the Devils and Man's since the Fall, and before the Operation of God's Grace: They mingle with it self-respect as the principal; and in the application and actuation of their desires, they are carried only to deceitful appearances, and do in Truth hate what is really good. The ground of the activity, or the desire in general, being corrupt instead of tending to its end with its whole instinct tends only to itself, and so indeed tends only to evil: And when it descends to particulars, and applies itself to some one object this or that, it does in none of them truly Love either Light or good, but contrariwise has them in extream abhorrence, seeks nothing but evil and darkness, empty shadows which it rakes for the true good and substantial Light. And so the more eagerly it pursues and breaths after its own idle Fictions, the deeper does it plunge itself into darkness and misery.

Nor is it possible it should be otherwise: For being out of the Fountain of good, and void of its divine Operations, and in itself deprav'd and corrupt, it must needs act according to the ill state its in, and as 'tis the nature of a thing to act, that is corrupt and void of the true good, that is, it can do nothing, but evil: So that were it not for God's meer
and

and preventing Grace, Man since the Fall could not have so much as one single desire, but what is corrupt and inordinate, and so does in this state naturally, that is, from the nature of a state corrupt and void of Grace, abhor the true Light and the true good. All his desires are carried only to evil, and that knowingly, not indeed with an enlighten'd and clear knowledge, but dark and deluding. Which dreadful Truth is apparent from the Devils. How can imperfection produce perfection, and a nothing be the cause of reality?

Chap.
II.

XXI. Let us confess therefore to the glory of God's Mercy, that without his Grace and the kind Operation of it, the Wickedness of Man would be as desperate and incurable as the Devils is. For without any the least aggravation, it is a most certain Truth, that without the Grace of God, our nature, our heart, our innermost state in themselves since the Fall, are as bad and as unfit to desire or do good as the very Devils, and that Man can by his own Power convert and save himself just as easily as the Devil can make himself God. Here you see the deepest and highest ground of our nature consider'd without God's Grace.

XXI.
Without
God's
Grace
Man is as
unable to
do good
as the
Devil,
nor in
himself a
 jot better

XXII. And thus it is plain what Reason we have to renounce all our active desires that are not guided and assisted by God's gracious Operation: There being in very Truth nothing in us but matter of abnegation, rejection, mortification, and even of Death and Burial. God's Grace, and the Doctrine of the Gospel do both of them assure us of these Truths. Christ's first Precept is this, *¶ If any Man will follow me let him deny himself*; as having in himself nothing that is good; nay so exceeding wretched are we that we cannot come up to his denial, this ceasing and Death of ourself by our own strength, nor unless God prevent and assist us, and according to his Almighty Power effect it in us, as we shall see he will. But in the mean while let us stick close to these cardinal Truths, that the desire in the very bottom of its activity is corrupt, all its particular acts and desires deprav'd, prone, and united to evil; that this Principle or Faculty, cannot help itself, nor

XXII. *¶*
Man corrupted
there's
nothing
but evil,
and matter of
Renunciation.
* Mat.
16. 24

Chap.
II.

be set right by the Liberty, because it rather strikes in and joins with the evil desire, and not only gives its general consent to the Habits and Inclinations of the deprav'd desire, but singly and particularly to all and every act present and to come, and to the duration of them all.

XXIII.
Man's recovery impossible, but by the turning away of his liberty and desire from evil, and turning them to good. How God effects that by beginning at the desire.

XXIII. Man can no other way be delivered from his Misery, but by being separated from evil and united to good, or by his turning from evil and cleaving to good: To the bringing about the first, it is necessary, that this double Union of his (that by which his desire cleaves to evil, and that by which his liberty is fastned, both to the present evil desires and their future continuation) be opposed by a double separation and aversion; Namely by the aversion of his desire from evil, and by the aversion of his liberty or assent from the evil desire and its continuation. So likewise that he cleave to or be united to good, it is necessary that his desire be bent to good, and his liberty to good desires. But the liberty cannot begin of itself, nor can God at first begin there by acting directly upon it. Therefore he will first begin at the desire. And here I shall give you the beginning of the Divine Operation, as they set out from their Source and Root.

The Order, Connexion, and particular ways of the Operation of God, and Co-operation of Man.

XXIV.
God's first operation in the Soul. It is three strokes or effects.

XXIV. God transiently strikes and pierces the Soul as 'twere with a bright Ray which discovers to it a good it has not, and the evils it has. This divine stroke, this first Operation of God does three Things. First, it causes a lively Sensation; Secondly an interruption of the evil acts; Thirdly, it gives the Soul a good Motion, an Inclination to good and an aversion to evil.

God does this out of his pure and infinite Love in consideration of the Merits of his well beloved Son, without any thing previous on Man's Part but his guilt and rebellion. He being Omnipotent may easily do thus much without Man's consent, who cannot hinder him from proceeding so far. Nor will this seem strange if

if we remember that the Soul, or the desire is not a thing meerly active, but passive too, when expos'd to the action of an Object, especially when 'tis a powerful one. Chap. II.

This sovereign Good then, this all powerful Light insinuates into Man's Heart, which it strikes on its passive side, and through all its Darknēss and Sins gives it a glimpse of Truth and Good, and of some part of its wretched State. This the Soul is very sensible of at first, and if she correspond, becomes still more and more so; but if she does not, thro' her hardning herself grows less and less sensible: for God takes no pleasure in reiterating acts extraordinary, and making Souls more guilty, as they certainly are, that will not answer his Calls: Nevertheless, during this life he fails not to be present and at hand to the Soul, even then when she does all she can to forget him and shut her Eyes; to this she owes those strokes and stings of Conscience she often feels. But to consider this first Operation in its first instance only.

Upon this stroke of God there follows immediately for this time an actual ceasing of the Sinners evil desire; his evil desire before was actually set upon evil: To cure this it is necessary it should be actually taken off from it; which is what this first Operation of God's Grace does, during which the Sinner leaves off actually uniting himself to evil; and thus God by the Operation of his Grace causes the first Separation and the first turning away of the desire from evil, without which, Man could never cease from doing evil.

Nor is this all God does; for considering that Man's desire is bent and carry'd to evil by its ill motions, he does not only put a stop to the act of the ill motion, but impresses upon it a good one, quite contrary to it, by which the evil motions are repulsed, and the Soul, or Desire, which before was carried away to evil, return (while this Operation lasts) not only to a ballance and indifference to good or evil; but is indeed push'd and born away by the force of this Counter stroke of God towards good, which it then actually touches. Thus does God raise in the sinful Soul good desires, which all the time of this Operation, set her on the side of good. I appeal to the most corrupt and wicked, whether it

Chap. II. be not so when God touches them, and whether he has not often done it in the midst of their Excesses and Riots.

XXV. I say moreover that these Dispositions into which the wicked Soul is brought back, viz. the Sense and Sight of good and evil, the actual turning away of the desire from evil, and the actual good motion, or the passive good desire towards good do sensibly continue in the Soul as long as this stroke of God lasts; and this stroke of God abides long enough for the Soul to correspond if she will, as then she easily may, thrown as she is out of the evil into the good. But these precious Moments must not be lost. *This is the accepted and convenient time*, spoken of in Scripture. *Seek the Lord while he may be found, call upon him while he is near. Whilst you have the light walk in the light least darkness overtake you. I stand at the Door and knock, if any Man hear my voice and open the Door to me, I will come in and sup with him.* These are Minutes of value inestimable, for on them depend eternal Life and eternal Death; this is an opportunity as irreparable when past, as 'tis advantageous while present.

XXVI. Thus much God will and can do in Man by the Operation of his preventing Grace, to pluck him out of his miserable State, and to begin the work of his Salvation. But as yet, Man though he sensibly perceive both the good and the ill, and find a stop put to his evil desire, which is then actually drawn off from evil, and feels itself actually carried and set upon good, is not for all that at all the better in God's sight. This is not the admission of Divine Grace, nor of any consequence to him till he correspond with it by his own Operation, which must be his own act, and which God cannot do in his stead nor for him.

XXVII. This is a Truth that must be laid down as the foundation of all God's dealings and dispensations with Men, that Man is free to receive or reject of his own accord the Operations of God's Grace when he presents them to him. True, he can neither cause nor extinguish the Sensation of them; nor is that the Question at present; but he can either admit or exclude wherein he may, at his choice, correspond or not.

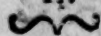
them

them by the consent and co-operation of his other Faculties if he please. And I cannot but wonder at Mens blindness that deny this fundamental Truth, but for which all God's dealing with Man, as 'tis represented to us both by Scripture and our own Conscience, would be meer mockery, absurdity, iniquity and hypocritical falleness. Why should not Man, who could before the Fall, as well as the Angels, correspond or not to the operation of God, be able to do so still when God is pleas'd to give him so much Grace as is necessary to put him in a condition to do it if he will himself? Is it because 'tis impossible God should ever have the Will to give him this Power, by reason of some contradiction or impossibility imply'd in it? Not so; for 'tis generally agreed, that before the Fall the thing was really so, and that Man had received of God such Grace as put him in a capacity of corresponding to it or not, purely at his own choice. Supposing then God be still pleas'd to give Man so much Grace as shall yet enable him to correspond to it or not, could not in this case, Man effectually correspond to God? If he had not this Power when 'twas God's design to give him all that was necessary to his having it, then would God's Grace be of itself vain and ineffectual, seeing it's intent was to replace Man in a State wherein he might be able to chuse good or evil, and yet Man could not be so restor'd, nor by God's Grace have such Power. And what is it he wants to the having it, if being free, as he naturally is, the Grace of God makes him sensible of the light and of the darkness, if it break off his act from the evil, if it carry and move him to the good? What can then hinder the Liberty from joining its consent and act to this? Can Man's Darkness, his evil Actions, evil Inclinations and Habits hinder this for that very time that the stroke of God makes the act of them to cease, counterbalances the Motions of Corruption, and gives good ones in opposition to them?

But may be, though it be granted Man may then effectually correspond, it will be said, he cannot resist the operation of God. If so, he would then be a thing purely passive, nor could he so much as correspond actively from his own Liberty. And why should not he be able to refuse God's Grace, since being then cor-

rupt

Chap.
II.



Deut. 30.

19.

Ecclef.

15. 16. 17

XXVIII.

Of Man's
Co-operation.
Five
sorts of
Co-operations.

XXIX.

First sort
of correspondence,
that of
a most
absolute
refusal.

rupt, he is much more capable of being wanting in his Duty to God, than he was before his Fall, which was caus'd purely by the refusal of his co-operation with the Grace that God offer'd him, which is in substance always one and the same. I shall not repeat things already touch'd in their place. Only let us remember this Passage of Scripture and stick to it. *I have set Life and Death before thee - Therefore chuse Life that thou mayest live. And this other; The Lord has put before thee Fire and Water; stretch out thine hand to whither thou wilt; Life and Death, Good and Evil are before Man, and that which he chooseth shall be given unto him.*

XXVIII. Man being free may several ways co-operate with God's Grace. To avoid confusion, and to set these important Matters in somewhat a clearer light than they have been hitherto, I shall reduce the different sorts of correspondences or co-operations of Man to five principal ones. The first sort of co-operation (I rank them thus at Pleasure) shall be that of an absolute refusal: The second, that of a refusal mixt with some little good: The third, the most Excellent, and such as should be the Pattern of all the rest: The fourth a very good one, yet mixt with Imperfections: The last a spurious one, made up of good and ill; but much more delusive and false than good and true. I shall resume and briefly touch upon them all.

XXIX. The first sort of correspondence, which is more truly a denial of co operation and correspondence, is thus. The Soul being touch'd of God in the manner aforesaid, instead of giving her consent to this operation of God, which discovers to her the Divine Light and her own Miseries; instead of consenting to have the evil acts of her desire interrupted, and herself separated from them; instead of consenting to the good Motions God gives her towards good, and to the Motions of aversion to ill with which he inspires her: Lastly, instead of on her part separating the activity of her desire from the evil, and joining it to the good that God makes her a tender of, she voluntarily turns herself away, not only from the Principle of her Liberty, but also because having it may be had little experience of her own correspondence, she finds Bitterness and

Chap.

II.



and Trouble coming upon her, which she resolves never to endure, and so she makes the acts of her Liberty, and the activity of her desire return to their old Bents and to their accustom'd Objects, in which her blind Self-love makes her place her Pleasure and Delight. When any thing new happens to such a Soul, the first thing she does is, to see if it suite or be contrary to her Inclinations, and so to admit or reject it accordingly. And the case of such Souls is desperate while they obstinately persist in this course.

XXX. The second sort of correspondence is much the same, only with this difference, that these Souls having at first for a while determin'd their consent to the consideration and sense of the Divine operation when they lay aside these Thoughts and return to their old Inclinations and Vices to which they are resolved to abandon themselves, there remains in them a more lively Trace and Impression of the Divine operation, that had broken off the evil acts, and rais'd in them some aversion to ill, and given them a taste of good; an Impression this which serves these Souls as a curb and bridle to restrain them from those ills they have had some sight of, and to which their Corruption, constantly follow'd by 'em in every thing else, would infallibly carry 'em, but that this same Print retains 'em and keeps 'em from the outward Commission of those particular Sins, their Heart being all the while not one jot the better. The same may be said of some Impressions of certain good things that are yet left in 'em, and that these footsteps are the cause of their approving and practising of, but outwardly only, or on Motives very carnal and far from pure. Examples of this are to be seen in the *Jews* and *Gentiles*, and in the greatest part of modern Christians: I might enlarge here, but I shall wave all further considerations, and proceed to the Third sort of Co-operation, which is the true One.

XXX.
The second sort of Correspondence, a constrain'd refusal with a check.

XXXI. This Co-operation is the most excellent and most perfect of all, and is reduc'd to practice thus.

spoudence, the entire resignation of our selves to God. The excellence and rarity of this Correspondence.

XXXI.
The third sort of corre-

First,

Chap.
II.

First, The Soul having a sight of her own evils and of the goodness of God by a Divine Light, feeling for a time the actual Cessation of her own evil acts, and the good Motions and Desires which God produces in her, turns away her consent from her evil past acts, from their Desires and from their Continuation for the future: She consents to their Cessation for ever. This is the first active turning away from evil, and is no more than may be done by the Soul when prevented by God's Grace.

Secondly, She turns the act of her Liberty towards the operation of God, consenting that the Divine Light give her such Sight and Sense as it pleases, both of her own Miseries and Deformities, and of the Divine Truths and Beauties; and that it put a stop to all her evil Actions, and give her all the good it shall think fit. And this is the act of Conversion, which is in the Power of the Soul by her liberty to offer to God when prevented by his Grace.

In the Third place, the Soul by the Union of her Liberty with the Motions of God receiving strength to join her active Desire to the good which God presents to her, she turns the activity of her Desire to the Desire passive, or towards the good Motions rais'd in her by God, that she may be sure to conform all her particular active Desires to the Divine.

But (in the Fourth place) the Divine Light still increasing in the Soul, discovers to her that the very activity and fund of her Desires are corrupt, and that the good ones God gave her, were chiefly designed to let her know that he is the Fountain of 'em, and that he can rectify the Desire abandon'd to him. Then the Soul desists from all proper Desires of her own, and has only one general one which she ventures not to determine herself, but surrenders it up to God with her Liberty and all that is within her, to dispose of all as he pleases, as if she should say to him, "Forasmuch as thou art the Fountain of all good, and canst never do the least evil; and I am become a Fountain of all manner of evil, nor can of my self do the least good; am of myself good for nothing but to offend thee and damn my self; and if I pretend to mix my own activity with thy Grace, I do but hinder thee, and
" check

“check thy operations, who art so excessively merciful as to vouchsafe to descend into me, and destroy all my actual and habitual evils, and to stablish in me all that is good, whereof thou art thy self the only Fountain; I do therefore, O most adoreable Creator and gracious Redeemer, that hast in so great mercy prevented me, give up and absolutely resign unto thee my Liberty, my Desires, and all my other Powers, with all and every thing that is by thy gift and grant under my Jurisdiction, and which I have spoil'd and corrupted, beseeching thee to accept of it, and do with it what thou pleasest; destroy and build, kill and make alive, do and let alone, just as thou wilt, for I am from this time forward resolv'd to cleave only to thee, and to take thy holy Will for my own, which I do now absolutely and for ever surrender up unto thee.

This is the purest and shortest way of all quickly to correspond with God, and re-enter into the State of the new Creature. This way is more passive than active, there being nothing active in it but the Act of the Liberty which resigns itself up and consents to be passive under God. God soon perfects that Soul that thus gives up itself to him, and Desires nothing but to be passive to his Divine Conduct. But it must be acknowledged that few thus give up themselves to him, and the very best do it but very late, after having done their utmost and tired themselves in the active way. And yet, though this be a narrow way, it is that which leads to Life; and all that will be purified and sav'd must pass it sooner or later. 'Tis true, they shall there meet with a cruel Death, painful Crucifixion, and dreadful Burial; but they are likewise to remember, That *he that loves his Life shall lose it, but he that hates his Life in this World shall preserve it to life everlasting.*

John 12.
25.

XXXII. The Fourth sort of Co-operation, though not so excellent as the preceeding, is nevertheless good and pleasing to God, and is perform'd as has been set down in the Three Degrees of the foregoing Article, without coming up to the fourth. Look we back

XXXII.
The
fourth
sort of
correspondence
or co-

operation, the active way.
then

Chap.
11.

then to the Three first, and observe how the Soul arrived at the Third, and being naturally and habitually inclin'd to act, and produce Desires by her own activity, and to the active Conduct of herself, cannot all of a sudden quit it; so that, upon the first passive Desires that God produces in her, she commonly awakens her own activity of desiring, endeavouring by it to desire, as God desires in her, as I may say; She will needs apply her own Power of desiring to the Motions of God's Grace, that she may produce acts of particular and active Desires, conformable to the good passive Desires which God excites in her.

She very well knows she is corrupt; but yet not being thoroughly acquainted with her Corruption, thinks by joining her active desire with God's Grace, she shall by so doing attain to a tolerable degree of Health; that all will be well, that God's Grace will support her, she having already turn'd from ill, and apply'd herself to the Light and good Motions of God. And so far indeed it is well. The Desire willing to walk by its own activity, yet holding God by the Hand as it were, goes forward towards God; but in Truth but slowly and not without stumbling, like a little Child that will be going on his own feet, tho' he still hold his Mother by the Hand, instead of renouncing its own petty activity and little steps, and letting its Mother carry it. We go at another rate, when we boldly throw ourselves into God's Hands, entirely quitting and dying to ourselves, then when we will accompany God only by particular Acts of our own forming. Nevertheless, there being scarce one of Ten Thousand that at the very first enter'd and held on this way, and since that of activity ends in it at last when we have spent ourselves, and the Child is weary of walking, God consents, is willing, and indeed requires that the Soul inclin'd to activity, and as yet incapable of standing still, correspond likewise to him by the way of the activity of her Desires, provided she hold him by the Hand, and endeavour that her own Acts imbibe the force and rectitude of the Divine Desire. 'Tis better a Child that won't yet be carried, go in his Mothers Hand than stand stock still in the way,
or

or wander out of it, and throw himself into a Precipice.

Chap.
II.

XXXIII. The Fundamental Reason, why the truly Converted do not all at the first walk in this excellent way of absolute resignation, and why God who is best pleas'd with this way, and who always Wills what is best, consents nevertheless, nay even exacts and commands that Man correspond to him in the active way, tho' it be so imperfect, is Man's weakness, who at first could not (I speak of a moral impossibility) endure the pure and forcible Operations of God in so great and painful a nakedness, 'till he be first used to adhere to God most resolutely and above all Things. For a Man to exert some acts of absolute and purely passive resignation, is not so very rare; but not being as yet accustomed to adhere to God at any rate, as soon as God's Operations grows painful, when it invests the hidden irregularities of Corruption, when the inward Sores begin to be pressed, and when the old habits within, and the objects without bear hard upon the Soul, she seldom persists long in her pure resignation, but quickly falls back to consult with and provide for her self, or at least to endeavour to find by her own activity, some speedy means to help herself. Her adhesion to God at first by the passive resignation of herself to him, is not as yet habitual nor strong enough to keep her firm and fixt in God, and from coming down from the Cross if she can, to assuage the dreadful pain of the Divine Operation, by which the old Man is Crucified in perfect nakedness. Possibly no one ever began at and continued in this pure way to the very end. Men ordinarily for a while beat the road of activity, which is therefore the more necessary, because by it Man's weakness is taught in a manner more suitable to it, how to adhere to God habitually and above all that we can either conceive or imagine. 'Tis certain that acting in concert with God, looking unto and holding him by the Hand, we acquire, by his Divine Grace, the habit of adhering constantly to him above all Things. And this habitual adherence, acquir'd by God's Grace in conjunction with Man's activity, is much stronger than the single act of adherence wrought at the beginning by an act of perfect resignation. So that then we are

XXXIII.
Why Men do not at first give themselves up to the most perfect way; and why God commands the way of activity; and how that is necessary.

by

Chap.
II.



by our activity, as a preparative means, more dispos'd to undergo incomparably better than before, in nakedness of Spirit God's pure Operation, whenever he shall please to communicate it. And this is the reason why God so highly approves and so much recommends this way. But there is a time for all Things. A time to work and a time to leave off. God never fails on this occasion to direct the sincere that heartily desire and continually beseech him to prepare their ways aright, and make his paths plain before them, and shew them the way they should walk in and lead them in it by his good Spirit.

XXXIV.
*The Fifth
sort of
Co-ope-
ration; the
spurious:
the two
ways how
it is ef-
fected.*

XXXIV. I am now to speak of the spurious Co-operation, which is much more dangerous than the two bad ones, the first and the second, because the badness of them is too gross to deceive any that will but never so little consider them; whereas this last, under specious appearances, deceives most of those that mean well. It puts on a Thousand disguises, nor is it possible to give a particular account of all its ways; in general it goes thus;

The Soul which God has touch'd with a Light that gives some knowledge of good and evil, of truth and falsity, this Soul whose evil acts he has put a stop to, in which he has excited good motions, instead of immediately giving God the consent of her Liberty and the activity of her Desires, stands gazing at the beauty of the Light and the sweetness of the motions she finds herself struck with, and taking her Reason and setting it on work about them, considers them after a human manner, forms barren and speculative Notions of them in the Mind, by her own Labours and close Applications, then comes the Liberty and gives its consent to those Notions fram'd in and by the Reason, together with the desires, activity and full acquiescence of the Soul. This is the Disease of the greatest part of the Learned, to take only the best of them: This is likewise the origine of that dead Faith we shall speak of presently. They that follow not the way of Study, take here a something different Course. They consent to God's Operations in them, to them they join their Desire and its whole activity, which they readily employ for God; but do not sufficiently turn themselves towards

towards the Divine Light, and its good motions which would more and more enlighten them, and discover to them the malignity of their Heart, how corrupt their Faculties, and how universal their Darkness is. So that through their not sufficiently adhering to God, and holding him as it were by the Hand, they join to God's Operation their own activity, their own ways and manners, which are as yet wholly corrupt, tho' cover'd with the fair pretext of acting for God, of hating evil and loving good; as indeed the Desire or Will in general is that way bent, but in the Application and particular Instances is stark naught: And therefore they at last find themselves plung'd into Darkness and Death, except they recover out of this deceitful and spurious Co-operation, which is the Source of infinite mischiefs.

XXXV. Hence arise spiritual Sloth, false Quiet, and false Assurance. Men content themselves with a good Desire in general, and fine Speculations, and fancy this is Co-operating with God as they ought; that their Business is done, and they brave and rich. Hence spring up a Thousand Fictions in the understanding, and as many Delusions of self-love, and Passions in the Will, and that with relation to Things the most Divine. Man since his Fall has an inexhaustible fund of Darkness, Errors, Prejudices, evil Inclinations and Habits: Is an abyss of self-love, of adhesion to his own Opinions, Ways, and whatever touches his corrupt State. If God but give him some Light and good Motions within, and outwardly by the Ministry of the Word speak to him of that Light, of his Divine Grace, of his Goodness, and Will, of his Righteousness and Truth, of *Jesus Christ*, and spiritual good Things; this inconsiderate giddy Creature, immediately taking advantage of what is passive in his Desire, and not at all suspecting his own activity, gives it the reins, and without the least controul consults concerning these Divine Matters, his own Darkness, Prejudice, and Opinions, his old bents and inclinations, in a Word his own self-love, and whatever that inspires; and in these vices and this adhesion he frames to himself Conceptions of God, of *Christ*, of his Grace and Merits, and of the rest, all a ter his own

XXXV.
Evil
Fruits of
the Ba-
stard Co-
operation,
False
Peace,
Delusion
and Pre-
sumption.

Chap.
II.

Fancy and Humour. He squares out a Will of God according to his own Desires, and perfectly agreeing with the Inclinations, and Life of the old *Adam*: Will cut out a Righteousness, Holiness, Faith, and a Love of God, just fitting his own size: And taking himself to Desire, and what's more, even truly to embrace *Jesus Christ* and his Righteousness by Faith, do in effect desire and embrace the deceits of the Devil, the Imaginations and Devices of his own blind and self-deluded Heart, and there sleeps so soundly that nothing but his final fall can wake him.

Hence again proceeds a certain pitiful Presumption, and Spiritual Pride, but indeed of a very gross Nature; some valuing themselves upon the Lights God began to give them, upon the Notions and Knowledge they have, and are so dextrous at spreading and making a shew off; others glorying in the good Motions and holy Desires God has frequently inspir'd them with, who yet have no otherwise corresponded than they in the Parable, they receiv'd this Divine Seed with Joy, and spent their time in looking on these fine and good Things, and in Rejoicings, that God had favour'd them with them. This to me is no better than bragging, as we are going to the Gallows, that we can read and explain the Sentence by which we were Condemn'd:

Jc. 12. *The Word which I have spoken to you shall judge you at the*
48. *last day, says Jesus Christ, and he that knew his Masters*
Luk. 12. *Will, and did it not shall be beaten with many stripes;*
47. *to such will he say, Thou wicked Servant out of thine*
Luk. 19. *own Mouth do I condemn Thee; for they Witness a-*
22. *gainst themselves, that God has enlighten'd and mov'd*
them to good, and that yet they have sat still and
done nothing; or else employ'd the Talents of Light
and Love God gave them to compass their own Ends,
and do their own Will.

XXXVI.
The Cause
and Reason
of these Mis-
chiefs.

XXXVI. We see by this, how much deceit lyes lurking under this false correspondence, and that Lights and good Desires are not always marks of a good State, of a State of true Faith, or of a living and solid Hope. But whence can this come, and how is it to be remedied at the very root? The matter methinks is very plain, after the Truths I have already explain'd. Man being of himself so wholly corrupt
in

in his fund, in his faculties, in his activity, and in his conduct, and the Grace which God offers him being of no benefit to him unless he receive it in a due manner, we must not wonder if it profit him not, when he receives it with a perverted Reason, and a selfish Will; both these being good for nothing but to be Crucified and Slain. God's Operation in Man, is a Thing most excellent, and of inestimable value; for one ray of Truth and one motion to good, is of more worth than the whole World: But to receive them inconsiderately in and with Reason, in and with our own Desire, is to abuse and pollute them, 'tis to commit Adultery with God's Truth, and to prostitute it to all sorts of uncleanness. The Reason of Man since the Fall, is a meer Shop of Chimera's, his Desires nothing but Delusions of self-love, and yet he pretends to receive God's Grace in them and by them, without any more ado. Certainly there is more requir'd here than such rash and senseless Procedure.

Chap.
II.

XXXVII. Here we must forego both Reason and self-will, tho' appearingly never so good, and begin with giving up our Liberty to God who is working in us. By this resignation, we acquire a clearer knowledge of God's Lights and of his inward Motions, and also of the wretched and corrupt State of our Faculties, and this makes us, when we mean to correspond by the activity of the Desire to God's good Motions, stand upon our guard, lest in applying the activity of our Desire to the motions of God, we under, and with it introduce all its corruption, our own perverted ways and Manners, our own particular evil Desires, with the whole train of self-love, at least all that has any fair appearance, and hides its deformity under a mask of Light and beauty: Which would infallibly damn us, notwithstanding all the good Motions God might have given us. Now the best and only way to be upon our guard, is the Renouncing all our own Desires, which is the same thing with what the Gospel calls, *denying our own Will*, which our Saviour so often exhorts us to.

XXXVII.
*The only
Remedy
of these
Evils, is
an absolute
Renunciation.*

XXXVIII
*What the
 Objects of
 this Re-
 nunciati-
 on are ;
 and the
 danger of
 neglect-
 ing it.*

XXXVIII. Not that Man is to renounce the active Faculty which he has of desiring good, any more than the good passive Desires which God gives him : But in the Application which he ought to make of this general Desire to its true and particular Object, he must renounce his own conduct, the particularizing as I may say, of his Desires, their Ways and their Objects, the consulting of self, of his own particular Opinions and Inclinations : Man must abstain as from Death, from raising of his own Head to his general Desire, by the efforts of his own particular Application, Attention and Study, of his own Reasonings, Imaginations and Inclinations, any particular Ways and Objects, how Divine soever he may think them ; and if any such present themselves to him to tempt him to do so, he must beware he determine not his Desire that way, nor join them to the good Motions God gave him for the Light and for the good. If he acts otherwise he exposes himself to a more dangerous Fall than the first : For then he takes his own Conceits and the Idols of his own distemper'd Brain for his Light and for his good ; and so gives entrance and authority to the Devil in his Heart : For Corruption is the Devils Element, who by and with it has free Passage every where, whose Throne is the selfish Desire, the selfish Reason and the self-will of Man. But if he forbear all this, and keep his Desire indeterminate and general in Aspirations after a Principle and Inclination proceeding elsewhere than from ourselves, then the Co-operation how faulty and spurious soever it were before, becomes legitimate and just.

XXXIX.
*No Co-
 operating
 with God
 without
 denying
 self.*

XXXIX. It is plain therefore, that no one can rightly Co-operate with God's Grace, but by denying self, and all that comes from self, and by constantly continuing in that State ; otherwise he would only Co-operate with his own Fancies and Fictions, with his own Errors and Heresies, his own Delusions and Deceits, and with all the Fruits of Corruption, nay, even with the Suggestions and Will of the Devil. Hence appears still more clearly the necessity of Renouncing self, and upon what just grounds our Saviour proposes this as the condition of our entering into the Kingdom

dom of Heaven; If any Man will come after me, *let him deny himself.* Chap. II.

XL. O how greatly deceiv'd in this matter, are even Persons of good Will and good Desires! How many such are there that really think they correspond to God's Grace: Nay, that they have already given it admission, are enlighten'd by it, are in possession of the Light and the Truth, are well grounded in Grace; know and do the Divine Will, are *rich, in abundance, and in want of nothing*, who yet, like the Churches of *Sardis* and *Laodicea*, are *Dead* before God, are *wretched and miserable, poor, blind and naked*; in a Word, are perpetually deluded by Satan, and their corrupt Nature. And all this comes to pass through their not having Renounc'd all the productions of their own Desires, of their own Inclinations, their own particular views and Opinions, and not laying their Foundation in this holy *Denial* of themselves, without which, Light is taken for Darkness, Evil for Good, Death for Life, corrupt Nature and its Motions for Grace, and the Devil for God; but with which there is no danger of delusion, the Soul being then in the way of God, who redoubles his Divine Operations in such measure as she Co-operates with them.

XLI. At the rate that I talk of Renunciation, it is evident, you'll say, that it is a Principal Good, and the very Foundation of Happiness, how then can such a Good be in Man's Power, who we say, is so Impotent to all Good? How shall we accord this? Very easily: Take these Three Observations along with you.

First, That Renunciation is no positive and real Good, but only evacuative and occasional. Now these sorts of Goods may in certain circumstances, come from the Creature. The faithful Angels have, in their way, furnish'd this sort of good on their part, and so did Man as long as he stood in Innocence.

Secondly, I distinguish between actual Renunciations, and habitual and radical, by which the Evil Plants that are and grow in the Soul are constantly and by the roots torn up. Now the Question is not here concerning the habitual or radical Renunciation, but the actual: For I am here treating of the first Co-

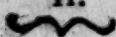
XL.
Without self-abnegation all's but cheat.

Rev. 3.
v. 1. 17.

XLI.
Whether it be in the Power of Man to deny himself: How and how far.

Chap.

II.



operation of Man with the Grace offer'd him of God. Should I say that this first act, which contains the actual Renunciation, comes from Man; yet would not this be to say, that the habitual and radical do so too; for as soon as Man elicits the first act of Renunciation, God gives him Grace to put forth a second and stronger, and so on by degrees to perfection, which is obtain'd only by the strength God continually gives in proportion to Man's antecedent correspondence.

Lastly, I never said, that Man could exert so much as the first act of Renunciation without God's Grace; on the contrary, I have shewn the necessity that God's Grace begins first to operate in Man: And that if in consequence of its Operation, the Liberty turn to God, as it may, it then gathers strength from God to stir up the activity of its desire to yield itself up to the action of God, and by denying self to stand it out against the Propensions of ill Habits, repulsing them as fast as they begin to be in Motion: So that the very first act of Renunciation proceeds from a Power in God's Grace, which is offer'd to Man, and which he may accept or not, according as his will is either to turn his Liberty to God or from him.

XLII.

*A general
plan of
the Ope-
ration of
God, and
Man's
Co-oper-
ation from
his Cre-
ation to
his Bliss.*

XLII. And this is what I had to say to clear up the first steps of God's Operation, and the Co-operation of Man. After this, the process is easily understood; when the way is once open'd, there is no difficulty, from our observance of the proportion in the corresponding, to represent how the work goes on by degrees on both sides to its utmost perfection; and this is what has been done already toward the beginning of the * Second Tract. But if you have a mind to see in short the whole process from first to last, you may take this general draught of it.

* Oeeon.

of Sin.

ch. II.

1. Man was created to lodge God within him, and for that end is endued with a Nature that Desires the infinite Light and Good.

2. He is created free; God will not dwell nor live in him, but with his Consent: And 'tis his part to apply his desires to the Object of light and good in such manner as he himself wills.

3. This

3. This Object is offer'd him.
4. But Man freely turns away from it to what other Things he likes best.
5. And so, becomes blind, dark, void of all Good, insensible of the only bright and good Object, which is no more as I may say as to him, nor any longer acts upon him, the eye and condition settled between it and Man, which was the intervention of the Liberty, being broken.
6. In this State, all Man's acts, desires and inclinations, can be nothing but disorder and Sin, wherein he must necessarily and inevitably Perish, except he receive help some way or other. Which yet is what he no way deserves.
7. God mov'd thereto out of pure Love in his Son, to whose Mediation and infinite Merits he can deny nothing, passing by Man's unworthiness, tenders to him a new, and gives him again his Light and his good; and insinuating into his interiour, strikes him with the rays and motions of his Divine Operation.
8. This Operation of God has this effect upon Man; first, it gives him a Sense and Sight, tho' but a confus'd one (yet sufficient to gain his first correspondence) of a Light and Beauty, somewhere without him and none of his; and then, of some horrible darkness and deformities within himself and properly his own; secondly, it breaks off and for this time puts a stop to Man's own Desires, Occupations and evil Acts; and in the Third Place, he by it feels his desires and Faculties carried and mov'd towards the Light and the good. So that this preventing Operation of God's Grace in Man does so much for him, as effectually to put him again in a condition to exert an act of Union of his Liberty, and after that, of his Desire with that of his Grace, or to omit it. To which he is then free.
9. To say nothing of such as correspond not, if Man joyns the consent of his Liberty to God operating in him, God by this act of Union infuses into him strength to turn his active desire towards him.
10. By these two Unions, first of his Liberty, then of his active desire, he moreover receives of God, First, an increase of divine Grace, which on one Hand discovers to him God's greatness, and on the other, the

map.
II.

the Vileness and Corruption of the Creatures, and how they are a hindrance to him; Secondly, By this he receives strength to resist the Sollicitations that the Objects from without make upon him, and the acts which the habitual Corruption of his Faculties prompt him to produce.

11. If he make a good use of these Divine strengths, as he may if he will, the good and luminous Grace of God becomes so effectual and strong in him, that with it he not only surmounts the outward Obstacles the Creatures lay in his way, but also employs them, and all the Powers of his Body, as means to encrease or preserve in him the Light of Grace, or at least, greatly to lessen and weaken the opposition it meets with.

12. But if, while he is going on in this Employment, he turn himself to himself and his own acts, and so stick to them as to think by them to procure to himself the substantial good and the true light, he falls into Judaism, Presumption, and the seeking the righteousness of human Works; and will from thence fall into a state of Obduration and Death, except he get out of this erroneous way.

13. If he do so, or having never been in it, continue in his first Correspondence, turning his Liberty and activity towards God, neither to will nor do any thing but what is pleasing to him, always remembering that he is not himself the Origin either of light or good; but that all he can by God's Grace do, is to permit God to enter and Operate in him, and by his activity to co-operate to the removal of some lets which obstruct God's operation; then does God infuse such strength into him, that with it he breaks and takes out of the way all discoverable hindrances to the Will of God, and uses all such means, and does all such things as he knows are pleasing to him.

14. But when he thinks himself far advanced, and his activity at an end, and as it were quite weary'd and spent in this holy Employment, which is a true worship of God; then does God strike him with a Light so penetrating and so lively, and with Motions so internal and powerful, that all the Corruption of the Inward

Inward Recesses of his Soul, is stir'd up from the very bottom. And this discovers to him on one hand so great and so perfect a Purity in God, that all his past good Works and Righteousness seem to him but little in comparison of it ; and on the other hand, the Corruption that is at the bottom of his Heart, which he discern'd not before, appears to him so heinous that not daring to do any thing more, nor to use an activity so corrupt as his is, despairing of whatever may come from him, he casts himself as dead into God's Hands, saying, " Lord I have only hinder'd, mar'd and polluted thy Divine Operation in me by my active Co-operation, so imperfect, so slow, so limited and so inconstant. I now see 'tis but lost labour to pretend to act in the purifying of myself as I ought. Behold, I will no longer have my liberty or the activity of my Desires concur with thee in a way of Association, whereof the direction should be partly mine whilst I hold by thy hand. I surrender the whole to thee for ever in pure passivity ; do with me what thou wilt : for 'tis Thou, O my God, that canst restore and save me.

15. From the time of this perfect Resignation, God becomes all in Man : he works in him as he pleases and without opposition ; and there Grace is absolute Mistress. 'Tis God that then disposes of the Liberty and Faculties of Man, of his Desires, his Understanding, and of every thing : He moves and penetrates all by the Motions of his Love and of his Divine Light ; but in such a manner as is at first very dreadful and mortifying to Sense ; because God's Motions investing the inmost Recesses of the Soul are expelling thence their most central and rooted Corruption, which is not done without great Agonies which are extremely acute and desolating to a Soul that is by Nature of the greatest and tenderest Perception imaginable.

16. But this perfect operation of purifying Grace being finished, the Soul comes pure out of this Furnace, and lives thence forward in the bright Element of reigning Grace. She is then a new Creature, and her Divine Faculties, now that they are repair'd in their utmost recesses, are govern'd and acted by the Holy Ghost,

Chap.
III.

Ghost, who uses them as he sees convenient for God's Glory and the Benefit of other Souls.

17. This is follow'd by happiness and the compleat and intuitive Enjoyment of Grace upon the Dissolution of the mortal Body, provided always the Soul abide faithful to the Conduct of God's Spirit by a continual and entire Resignation of herself to him.

Thus have I given in general the abstract of the Oeconomy of Man's Correspondence and Co-operation with God's Grace from the beginning to the perfecting the Work of Salvation. Tho' I did not enlarge upon all that is contain'd in this course; yet I said, I would treat a little more particularly of one of the principal Parts of this great Work. And that is what I Design in the next Chapter.

C H A P. III.

Of Faith, and first of Dead Faith.

I. The Importance of Faith in the Co-operation; the necessity of treating of it here.

I.



AFTER the most exact enumeration of every thing that ought to be in Man's Co-operation with God's Grace, it must be confess'd that the main and principal, is *Faith*. 'Tis it that does and comprehends all. 'Tis by it we Co-operate; 'tis it that is the Soul of Co-operation. All we have said hitherto is nothing but the different states or effects of Faith. 'Tis what God requires of Man as both necessary and sufficient to his Salvation. By it we come to know good and evil, reject the one and chuse the other; 'tis by it we are purify'd, justify'd, guided, persevere and are sav'd. I suppose the Reader to be so well vers'd in the Scriptures, as of himself to perceive that all these Propositions are consonant to them, without my needing to point to him the Chapter and Verse.

May be it will be said, I am not true to the promise I made at the beginning, of passing over in Silence such things as being common and ordinary, few or none could be ignorant of; and there being nothing commoner than Faith, or rather the knowledge of it, I ought to say no more of it, especially considering how much I have already said of it. To this I answer, That I believe there is nothing in the World less known, or if you will, more mistaken than true Faith, nor do I think what I have in other places said of it, is sufficient to remove Mens Prejudices concerning it. And for that reason it is that I will in this place endeavour to carry this so important a matter up to its first source, and thence trace it in some of its most considerable Streams, I mean, explain some of its principal effects.

Chap.
III.

*Oeconomy of the
Creation,
c. viii.
xi. and
xxi.*

II. I design not here an express Refutation of all the Prejudices generally entertain'd concerning Faith: They vanish of themselves at the Appearance of the real Truth; and then but to name, will be to confute them. I only desire you to take notice of a fundamental Truth laid down in the place just quoted, namely, That Faith originally and directly respects only God, exclusively of all Ideas of Creatures. For it is certain that God, being sufficient to himself by the Desire, Contemplation, and Possession of himself alone, without the Idea of any Creature whatever, had Power to make a Creature that should represent him as such, that is, a Creature to whom the Desire, Contemplation and Possession of God alone should be entirely sufficient without any other Idea at all. Therefore the Essence and all that is absolutely necessary to Faith comprehends God only, and nothing else. But if it so come to pass that God shall please accessorially to cause Ideas to spring up, and make other things, besides himself to exist, these will directly belong to other Faculties, and not to pure Faith. They will be the Objects, either of Mans Reason or other lower Faculties, tho Faith may accidentally, but not necessarily, be concern'd with them.

II. *God alone the direct and necessary Object of Faith.*

III. We

III. *How, when God joins by way of accession created things to the pure Object of Faith, we are to order our Faith with relation to these things, so as to make a good use of 'em.*

III. We must be sure to hold fast this Truth that we swerve not from it on Account of the Accessories that have been added to Faith since Man's Fall. Every one knows, that in the diverse Dispensations of Grace (which is the Object of Faith) there intervene a Thousand sorts of Creatures and Actions of Creatures, living, inanimate, human, Angelical, earthly, and heavenly, which are by God himself propos'd to us as objects of Faith, or rather as things inseparably annex'd to the Objects of our Faith, or as means to attain to Faith; gross means indeed, but yet such as suit us in that gross and earthly state into which we are fallen. Now the right course as to these Things, is not to employ our Reason about 'em, to endeavour by close Study and Application to get clear and distinct Conceptions of 'em, draw inferences and conclusions from 'em, and then put our Thoughts in such Order and Method as we shall think good; this is all but earthly and human; a Source of Errors and Delusions; a Faith meerly Historical, Dead, and indeed Devilish, the very Devils being capable of such a Faith. But we should, to act after the manner of Faith Divine, consider God only in all the created and external Things that are complicated with the Object of Faith; and without much pains, desiring or endeavouring to come at the particular Ideas of these Things, we should desire nothing but God only who it is that manifests, shews, and communicates himself to Man in and by them: We ought from the bottom of our Heart, with our Thoughts ever fix'd upon his Divine Majesty, to beg of him, that the design for which he communicates his Grace, his Knowledge, his Truth and Mysteries by such and such created means may be fulfilled in us according to his Divine Will; and that he would give or deny us such Knowledge or Ideas of these Particulars as he pleases, and as shall seem best to him for his own Glory and our Salvation. By this means we do in a Divine and Saving manner receive the Matters of Fact wherein Creatures are concern'd and wrap'd up together with the Objects of Faith. In these we look upon God; and know he has order'd every thing wisely, and humbly adore his Wisdom and Goodness in all. And if afterwards it be his Will to give some one or other, whom

whom he pleases, any particular Ideas of these Things, or if we do ourselves frame some Conceptions of 'em, we shall not stick to them as to God himself, or as the Principal; but shall rather presently discard 'em, after having us'd 'em to lead us to God, to whom alone and above all things, we adhere; and we shall be ready to receive still clearer and clearer Lights. If on the contrary we have no knowledge of these matters, yet we desire and love God above all Things, and adore him in the incomprehensibleness of his ways, which if they are not fit for us at one time, are either kept for us till another, or for some other Persons. Being thus dispos'd, we are always ready to be inform'd and free from Obstinacy, and charitably to bear with those that are ignorant of these particularities, or have quite contrary Thoughts of 'em to what we have. We shall bear with them in Love, because Opinions are not of the Essence of Faith. 'Tis enough, that whatever their Conceptions be, they desire God above every thing, and beyond all Ideas, that they look upon and desire God in all they think occasionally from any Idea whatever, and that they heartily wish his Divine Will, both reveal'd and Secret, may be done in them. Thus you see how Faith has purely and only God for its Object, though this God be presented to it, cover'd and encompass'd with created means, whose shell it pierces to come to the Kernel, the same God.

IV. The Scripture speaks of many sorts of Faiths which we must not confound, for that would but make us more at a loss what to resolve in the case. I shall therefore in the first place endeavour to clear up the ambiguity of the word, to avoid all Mistakes hereafter. St. James speaks of a *dead Faith*, in opposition to a *living Faith*. St. Paul, of a Faith of *Miracles*, that removes Mountains (which yet in itself is not saving) and of a sound sincere Faith, that justifies and gives peace with God. Some, as if they would supply the Defects of Scripture, do further distinguish Faith into *Temporary and Saving*, or *Justifying and True*. I

IV. Many sorts of Faiths, the distinction of Faith into Temporary and justifying, how far true and how false. James 2.

v. 20. 1 Cor. 13. v. 2. Rom. 3. 24. c. 5. 1.

Chap. don't mention *Historical* Faith, because we shall see pre-
 III. sently that is all one with the Dead.

The distinction of Faith into Temporary and Justifying, is in a sort Passable, if it be taken with regard to its Duration and Event, and if only this be meant by it, that Faith is either lasting and constant, which stedfastly persevering to the end, does at length bring forth the Fruit, and win the Crown of Righteousness, or else that it comes to cease through default of Man's Correspondence, who turns away his Desire from God, and ceases to Co-operate with his Grace, upon which his Faith dies, without obtaining the Crown of Righteousness which otherwise it would have done, had Man but cherish'd and persever'd in it. And this is all that is true in this distinction of Faith into Temporary and Justifying. But to imagine that a Temporary Faith is of a different Nature from that which in the end or by continuing its course attains to Righteousness and Salvation, is an Error that comes from the blindness and deceitful Presumption of the old *Adam*, who never having had or experienc'd what true Faith is, and taking the delusions I but lately spoke of, and his own Fancies, with which the Devil and his own Corruption amuse and deceive him for the true Faith; and these being the things he Idolizes and sets his whole Affection on, and still grows fonder and fonder of them without the least fear of Excess, or Desire of ever breaking with them, resolv'd as he is to live and die in them, and really doing so with a most notorious obstinacy; he from hence imagines, that it is the Nature of true Faith (which he falsely supposes himself to have) never to be lost. But if he see some of his Companions, that have been in the same Errors and Dotages with himself, forsake these idle Dreams, either to take up new ones, or heartily to embrace the sound Faith, then he cries out, that their Faith was no true Faith, that is, their illusions and dotages were not come up to the extremity of stiffness and obstinacy. And hence it is that he takes occasion to frame his chimerical distinction of Faith into Temporary (or not obstinate) and into true (or cheating and incurably obstinate.)

Above,
 c. 11. n.
 35. 40.

V. But those that have true Faith are very well assured both from Divine Light, and the Sense of an illuminated Conscience, that the greatest and liveliest Faith may wholly fail and be for ever lost as long as we are in this miserable Life: They know and see this has been the case of many a one, and are in continual and salutary trembling for fear it may be their own; we being all the time of this Life surrounded with such infinite Numbers of Enemies, and Objects of Temptation and Distraction, and it being in Man's Power, if he will, though in never so high a Degree of Faith, to turn his Desire towards these Objects, and take it off from God; and so ceasing to Co-operate with God, die to his Grace, and perish for ever, as all they do, whose Hearts or Desires are caught and entangled in Thorns and the Things of this World, or who let themselves be hardened and become insensible of God's Attractions through the endless Numbers of vain and transitory Thoughts and Distractions; or lastly, who do not let the Divine Light sufficiently pierce and take Root in their Heart by continual and fervent Desires, though they had receiv'd the very same Seed of Faith with those that persever'd, as is clearly intimated by the Parable in the Gospel. I shall be more positive as to this matter when I come to treat of absolute Perseverance. In the mean time let us not give ourselves any trouble about this distinction of Faith, into Faith Temporary, and Faith justifying and lasting, as if they were two sorts of Faiths of different Natures, one whereof was true Faith, and the other only an improper one and different from the true. True Faith may be either Temporary or persevering, according as Man faithfully Co-operates with God's Grace or not; as he watches over his Heart and Desires, or grows careless.

VI. Nor need we trouble ourselves with the consideration of the Faith of Miracles. This is besides our purpose, how pleasing soever the discovery of the Nature of it may be, which is indeed but little understood. There are therefore two sorts of Faiths which we are to understand and distinguish, the *living* and *dead* Faith: For the Historical and the dead are as has been said, and as we shall see, one and the same, and the *living* and *justifying*.

V. That true Faith may totally and for ever fail, and that Faith that lasts but for a time is in substance a true Faith. Mat. 13. v. 20.

VI. Two sorts of Faiths to be consider'd, the dead and the lively, which is the saving and justifying.

Chap.
III.

lively and saving, or justifying are likewise the very same with the true and real Faith; which bears these different Names from the different Regards it has to various effects, or from the different Degrees it is in, though it be always the same in substance; for it is call'd *living*, as its Desires is fed with God himself, and as it uses the strength it receives from this Food, to remove the Obstacles that lie in its way, to close with the means that help it, and to dispose all things according to the Will of God; it is call'd *saving*, because they that have it, are in the way of Salvation, and because Faith will in due time put them in the actual Possession of it; it is call'd *justifying*, because such as are endued with it are in the way of justification, and because this Faith when it has attained to a certain degree of Dominion, or is become the ruling Principle in them, will give them the Enjoyment of God's Righteousness, or will justify them; for Faith does not produce all its effects at all times, or in all states, much less in the twinkling of an Eye, and by way of Charm. I know I do not in this conform myself to the Opinions of a great many Men, nor am I more concern'd herein then they have been in solidly and impartially seeking out the Truth.

VII.
What the
Death of
Faith is:
Why a
dead
Faith is
call'd
Faith.
James 2.
26.

VII. The dead Faith according to St. James is a Faith without Works; not that the Death of Faith consists properly in the absence of Works. The absence of Works is a consequence and sign of the Death of Faith, or of a dead Faith; but not the Essence of its Death; as the absence of working, or the incapacity to move, is a consequence of the Death of the Body, but is not that wherein its very Death consists. That Death of the Body consists in the Hearts being depriv'd of the Principle of Life (nor need I descend to any more particulars to shew the justness of my Comparison) so the Death of Faith consists in the Souls Desire, being void of Grace, of God and his Light, which is the vital Principle of Faith. And as in the Death of the Body, though Life, and all that is most essential to a living Body be gone, there still remains the Figure of a Body, and Members which may be mov'd by Art; so likewise, though in the Death of Faith, what is most essential to it be away, yet there is

is left a kind of Figure and Idea of Faith, to which Art, or the Motions of corrupt Nature, may give some forc'd, affected or mechanically imitated agitations, but without any true Life. And 'tis by reason of this Appearance of this Idea, of this Figure, and of these Motions copy'd from the living Faith, as perfectly dead as they are, that this Carcass, this Fantom bears the Name of Faith, as a Man's Corps carries the Name of a Man, or as a Figure or Picture of the Sun is called the Sun.

Chap.
III.

VIII. The dead Faith (especially in the learned) springs, (if I may so say of the approaches of Death) or arises in Man two ways, the first in consequence of a living Faith, which comes to decay; the Second before the admission of a living Faith in the Heart; and the manner is thus.

VIII. Two
Originals
of the
dead
Faith.

IX. First let us imagine one that turns away his Desire from himself and the Creatures, and turns it towards God, having by him been call'd by some stroke of his Divine Light and Motions. This same Person will by his Desire thus determin'd towards God, give entrance to the Light and the Divine good, which will enlighten and touch him inexpressibly, more or less, according to the plenitude and perseverance of his Desire and his Co operation. Supposing him then to encrease and grow in Faith, the Light of God Illuminating his Divine Faculties in a more abundant manner (though incomprehensible and as yet obscure to his Understanding) does ray and shine back from them, as it were upon his lower Faculties, and especially on his Reason, where it paints a Thousand beautiful Ideas and Figures of Divine Things, a thousand Draughts of the Perfections of God, as the Sun imprints his Image and Figure in a hundred Fashions on the Surface of a Glas or still Water, or any other polish'd Body, yet is not himself in them. And this is the truer, in as much as since the Fall, the Object of Faith, or things purely divine are as it were cloath'd with outward and created Things. And altho' Faith of itself taste and see God only in every thing, without sticking in the thing itself; yet it reflects upon the Reason, a kind of Brightness which disposes and helps Reason the more easily to form particular Ideas of these Things, to con-

IX. The
first way
how a
dead
Faith is
produced
upon the
failing of
a living
one.

Chap. III. *sider them severally, and by Ratiocination to deduce from them abundance of particular Conclusions and Truths.*

If we suppose now that one who is come thus far should again carry his Desire towards Things that are not God, and wholly turn away his Desire from the Divine Light; then his Faith dies, his Desire and his interior lose God, his Light and the Divine Principle of his Motions; but the Images and Pictures of Divine Things, that were form'd in his finite Conception, or in his Reason, do still abide there (tho' much darken'd) and Reason endeavours more than ever to consider, range and multiply 'em infinitely, to stick to them, esteem, embrace, set 'em out and recommend 'em as the very Truth itself, and in a word, to make mighty and wonderful Matters of them, and the Man fancies himself Rich, Divine, Salvable and Happy because he is fraught with these Notions and Ideas, and firmly adheres to them. And this is what we properly call dead Faith. It is the Pictures of God and of Divine Things, an Image of the Light, a Pourtraicture of the Sun so far as it may be drawn on the Arbitrary and not Necessary Faculty of Human Reason, which is only capable of receiving the Draughts of Things divine, as well as the Ideas only of Creatures; but by no means God himself, or the Light which is God; no more than the Canvass of a Picture can receive in it the Sun, its Light and its Heat.

X. *The other Origin of dead Faith; human Reason.*

X. The other way that gives Birth to a dead Faith in Man, is when he instead of turning the ground of his Heart towards God who calls him inwardly, as well as outwardly by the intermediation of Creatures and their Voice, turns his Desire, his self-love, and his Reason towards God's Gifts, towards the means which God makes use of to Paint himself, as I may say, towards their Ideas which are rais'd and then variously rang'd by Reason, and these he looks upon as his Treasure, his Temple, his Idol, his Salvation and his God. Now when Reason applies its Desire, its natural Prayers (to speak the Language of some new Philosophers) in the search of the Particular Ideas whether of God or of Divine Things, or of Creatures so far as they are interwoven with the Objects of Faith, or

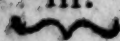
it may be of the words of Holy Scripture, when it sets on work the whole strength of its Attention and Meditation, thereby to raise in itself clear and distinct Conceptions of them, to look upon their various Faces, and to be fully perswaded of them, and to hold them as the solid Truth; 'tis then, and in this manner, it is that the dead Faith is begotten in the mind of Man, which is no more, as we see, than the meer work of human Reason, and that corrupt too, as it amuses itself with the Draughts and Ideas of Divine Things, without having the Light of true Faith.

To this owe their rise most of the Speculations and Theories concerning Religious matters now in the World: To this so many Systems of pretended Divinity, so many Articles of Faith, so many Opinions qualify'd with the Titles of Orthodox, Heterodox, Paradox, and so forth, according as Men have diversly form'd to themselves the barren and dead Images or Notions of God, of his *Christ*, his Grace, Justice, Will and Holiness, of his Mysteries, Life, Salvation, and other Divine matters, whereof they have in effect but dry and barren Figures, but Draughts commonly very Foul and Monstrous in their corrupt Reason, where for one ideal Truth there are lodg'd a thousand absurd fictions.

XI. Should I go about to enumerate all the abominable Idols which human Reason or dead Faith has fram'd in the matter before us, my task would be endless. There is nothing in Heaven or on Earth, nor in any the most Sacred and Divine Mysteries which has not by it been adulterated and polluted. Not but there may possibly be here and there some Ideal Truth, as some Relicks that Reason had drawn from the Light of Faith, or as an effect shap'd as near as she can after the most palpable Features of the Original which she feels out in the dark; but this is at present so sullied and confounded with the spiritual darkness that is necessarily in every Heart void of the living Faith, that we may be sure and certain that dead Faith has nothing in its barren Ideas but what is some way or other, if not wholly, monstrous and extravagant, even according to the Rules of right Reason, and with relation to the Divine Establishment in constituting natural Ideas, and the

XI. *The dreadful effects and excess of this dead Faith.*

Chap.
III.



Conduct of Reason. Yet this is not the greatest mischief of dead Faith. Its most hurtful quality is neither its death, nor the incongruity of its internal Objects, or of its Conduct. Let it be dead, that is, without divine desires, Light and Motions. Let it no more have Power to move, enlighten and warm the Soul, than a painted Sun has the Body; let its Ideas be vain and irregular, this is indeed some inconvenience; but it is a much more terrible one for it to set up itself and its Images in God's stead and in his place, and make it self and its Fantoms pass for God, and for his living, substantial and true Light.

XII. The
terrible
idolatry
of these
Days in
setting up
dead
Faith or
Reason
of cor-
rupt Man
for God,
and above
God and
true
Faith.
Lam. 4.
12.

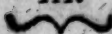
XII. There is left still some hopes that while Reason, as corrupt as it is keeps within its Element and Bounds, and does not pretend to the rank of divine and supernatural Things; there is still left some hopes I say, of returning to seek the living and divine Faith. But when dead Faith or human Reason, pretends to be divine, to be more than the true Faith, to be God himself; and takes its Productions and Illusions for the Eternal Word that enlightens Souls, there is no more to be hop'd so long as Men continue obstinately immers'd in such profound darkness. One could never have believ'd things would have been carry'd to so dreadful an extremity as they have in our days. *Who would have believ'd (to borrow the Prophet's words) that the Enemy should have entred into the Gates of Jerusalem,* and not only so far, but even into the holy place, into the most sacred part of the Sanctuary, and there exalt himself above the Ark of God's Covenant, above his divine Manna and Rod, that is, above the Faith, Food, and Government of God. Was it not enough that the Wisdom of this World, the Science of the Learned, the Reason of Man had seiz'd and so secur'd the Gates of *Jerusalem* and of the Sanctuary that there was no getting into the Church, but by such ways, Notions and Knowledge, as flow from and rise no higher than Reason; no being admitted into Holy Orders but by human Learning and Studies, by labour'd Discourses and Meditations, by the Activity and Speculations of Man's Reason? should they have gone so high as to deify this * Reason of theirs

* See Malebr. *Treatise of Mor.* B. 1. c. 2. n. 11 and 13.

to make it the Interpreter of Sacred Myſteries, to make it infallible and immutable; to ſubject all things, nay, God himſelf, to it, to prefer it before the true Faith and to make divine Faith but a means to lead us to Reason; and even to ſay, that this Reason is God himſelf? And what Reason after all? Why, the Reason that in Men and Devils is the Source of the barren Ideas, I do not ſay of Things Divine, but of Creatures and their Proportions to one another. The Reason in me that ſhews me that two times two makes four, the Reason that is not really diſtinct from the Ideas of Creatures, no not from thoſe of Senſe, of Figures and Extenſion, which we ſee when we look upon the very meanest Creature. This is that Reason which muſt be God, to which Faith and God himſelf (make this hang together if you can) muſt ſubmit. *These are thy Gods, O Iſrael, that brought thee out of the Land of Egypt.* Keep a Feaſt to them, dance and leap around them. Worſhip them, and make all the World fall down before them. Gather the People, ſend out Proclamations, cry it in the Streets that *to morrow is a feaſt to the Lord*, to this God which is the Reason of every one in particular and of all in general; to this God, which is our Ideas, our Fictions, our Viſions and our Chimera's, and whoſe ſubſtance they will have to be the extenſion and figures which fall under our ſight. Really I could almoſt fancy 'twas my own Madneſs only that made me hear ſuch Language as this, not from Men and Chriſtians, but from Churchmen, from the Religious, from Perſons profeſſing to be devoted to the Prayer of Faith. Methinks I ſee the accompliſhment of the Divine Viſion, the Prophet *Ezekiel* once had, when God taking him into the Temple to ſhew him the Abominations committed there, he ſaw plac'd there the Idol of Jealouſy, and figures of all kinds of creeping things and Beaſts painted on the Wall, before which ſtood the Governours of *Iſrael* and the Priests too, every one with his Cenſer in his hand worſhipping theſe figures and the Image of the Sun. If human Reason, which God has rejected in matters of Faith, and which he is jealous of, be not this Idol that provokes him to Indignation when 'tis ſet up there; if theſe Images and Figures of Beaſts which they ſtood

Chap.
III.Ibi
1.Exod.
32. 4, 5.Ezek. 8.
3, &c.

Chap.
III.



before with their Censers in their Hands, be not the low and creeping Ideas of this same Reason which is consulted with attention, and incens'd with natural Prayers; if this Sun they adore be not the natural Light of Reason, it must be confess'd there never was any such Thing as Figure and Antitype; and if this be not what is expressly and principally forbidden by God's Law, which Commands to make no Image or likeness of any Thing in Heaven, on Earth, or in the Deep, to represent the Deity by; nor to treat them as God, or as the Divine Substance, or Eternal Word, I confess, I understand not what St. Paul means, when

Rom. 7. he says, *the Law is Spiritual*. Hark ye Gentlemen
14. Philosophers, that would go for Christians, and pretend to embrace the true Faith, forsake these Idols of yours that are but the meer dung of a dead Faith. Lead the People no longer into such destructive Errors, *And take heed your selves, that you be not deceived through Philosophy, through vain and false Reasonings, after the way of Human Tradition, and the Principles of the Science of this World, and not after Christ*. 'Tis the Advice of the Holy Spirit which we ought to obey, tho' we were not able to discover the Sophisms and falseness of your deceitful Arguments, and of your Philosophy and Human Reason, which is always seducing and hurtful when it offers to set up for Judge or Guide in matters of Faith.

XIII.
That the
Ignorance
of Faith,
the am-
biguity of
Words,
and the
false In-
terpreta-
tions of
some Pas-
sages of
Scripture,
have giv-
en Birth and Growth to this pernicious Error.

XIII. Not but these Illusions are easy enough to be discern'd by any that shall bestow never so little Thought on them, and still keep the true Faith fixt before his Eyes. 'Tis no difficult matter to see they have no other Foundation but pure Ignorance, and shelter themselves under some ambiguity, or rather under the false and ill Interpretation of some Words of Scripture, and common Speech.

The Heart destitute of the true Light has taken these false glimmerings for bright and substantial Day.

Ignorance of the bare Notion of what Faith and Reason is, what their properties, principles, ends and

acts, has confirm'd them in this Confusion. For had they only had some general Notions of what these Things are, and of their differences, they would never in all likelyhood have proceeded to such excess. But 'tis no wonder now, they being Ignorant of what Faith and Reason is, what their essence and fundamental differences are, Things they never gave themselves the trouble of searching into.

The ambiguity of Words, that fixt them in their Error, is, the Word Faith, its being, for instance, frequently taken only for the credit that is given to some Things very often Chimerical, which some Men tell us, and which we understand not; nor is it strange there should by this means be introduc'd a dead Faith, much inferiour to right Reason: Sometimes likewise the Word Reason is taken not for the human and additional Faculty that answers to the arbitrary Ideas and Works of the Divine Conception, but for Equity and Justice, for the cause or motive and the end of a Thing. Under covert of this Equivocation, when we say in this last Sense that Reason is the rule of all that God does, that God orders all both within and without himself according to Reason (that is according to Equity, and from just and fitting Motives) these Gentlemen, the Rationalists, have concluded, that from this they had sufficient Grounds to make their Reason the Universal Judge, Rule and Guide, and that God himself was oblig'd to its dictates and orders. I wonder they did not by the same way attribute Reason to Beasts, Stocks and Stones, to Metals, and all their Motions; for 'tis certain that it is not without Reason (if we take this Word in the ambiguous Sense of it, for the cause and end of a Thing) it is not I say, without Reason that these Things are: Their Nature, Existence and Conduct, have their Reason, even to the moving of a Stone.

The ill and wrong Interpretations which they have given to some places of Scripture, that so they might bless and consecrate their Idol, are for instance, that of St. John, *In the beginning was the Word*, which they are pleas'd to Interpret by Reason, and that Man's too, tho' the Word λόγος which St. John makes use of, signifies properly and truly, the Speech or Word,

Chap.
III.

and also the Mind, Understanding as well as the Truth. They abuse likewise a Passage wherein St. Paul exhorts the Faithful to present to God a *reasonable Sacrifice*, which they Expound by a Sacrifice agreeable to the Ideas of Reason, and regulated according to human Reason. But if they are so mightily pleas'd with putting this Reason upon us every where why don't they expound these Words by a Sacrifice of Reason, in and by which Reason should be destroy'd, sacrific'd, and dye to itself? Seeing there is no making them believe that these Words signify a *spiritual Sacrifice*, as likewise a *just and suitable* one; the Apostles meaning being this, that since *Jesus Christ* had given himself a Sacrifice, for the reconciliation of Men, as he had before more than once Inculcated, it is but just that Men should give themselves to God as a Sacrifice holy and lively, and consecrated to his Will, and that this Sacrifice should be that of their Spirits to God, and not of Beasts, as were those of the *Jews*.

Lastly, They heap together all those Passages where God and the Saints recommend *Understanding, Knowledge and Wisdom*, and then without any more ado, apply whatever the Scripture says of them to human Reason, as if there were no difference between the Understanding, which is a Faculty capable of receiving from God in a way purely passive, the Supernatural and Divine Light of Faith, and Reason, or a Faculty that by the endeavours of its own activity, by its desires and attention to its own acts can do no more than excite in itself the Ideas of Creatures, or at best but gross, dead, and very imperfect draughts of God? Why do they thus confound the Divine Knowledge and Wisdom, which the Holy Ghost sheds into the Soul by the Divine Light of Faith, with Man's Reason, as if they were all one? For my part, I can say no more to this confusion of Things, than I have already in the *first Book, and elsewhere purposely.

* Oecon.
Creat.
ch. 8. 9.
and 21.
Cogit.
Rat. in
the Pre-
face.

XIV.
Necessity
of a
living

XIV. What has been said will its likely offend some that are wedded to these Opinions, or have publicly declared themselves in favour of them.

the World as to these dangerous Errors.

But

But who can help it? Must such deference be paid to Error, as to let it have its free course, and not a Word be spoke against it, for fear some should be displeased? All are not of that Mind. And yet I could wish there had been no necessity of my speaking of any one, tho' in never so general Terms: But unless I had, I could not set forth in its true Colours an Error, wherewith some go about to poison Mens Minds, who are already so dead to true Faith. Men cannot with too much circumstance be caution'd against a Poison so mortal as that is, which exalts above true Faith, a certain, I don't say, dead Faith, but a meer Flash, Fantoms and Chimera's, commonly the most silly and extravagant ones imaginable; such as are, for Example, the pretended Light and Reason, wherein we see to demonstrate, that second causes have no Power of acting; that the Figures we look on are the substance of God, which in Truth is to be perceived only supernaturally and by a lively Faith alone, which by this means is dethron'd from her rank and her place, given up as a prey to Whimsies, the most Fantastical and most dangerous to Men's Salvation, that ever yet appear'd in the World. For in other Errors one may still retain a certain submission of Mind that shall make us wait for some Light or other above our present attainments; and in that distance we find ourselves in from God, hope to draw nearer to him some way or other, which we leave to him: But here, we think ourselves already in God himself, that we see him and enjoy Communion with him; and after all we find that this miserable God of ours is no more than a vain Idol, to which we cleave with so much the greater Obstinacy as believing it, and resolving so to do, to be the very substance of the true God. We are persuaded we have already attain'd our end, and have now no more to do but to fall to Enjoyment the best way we can. And since they go about thus strangely to pervert the minds of Men, sure we ought to prefer the Love of Truth before a shy Reservedness, so destructive to our Neighbours Salvation, who would be in danger if none had the Heart to tell them that these Men were giving them Poison, for fear of displeasing one particular Author, who, if he be of an up-
right

Chap.
III.



right Heart, ought himself to be the first that detests his wicked Errors, and to recant them, and reclaim the World from them. And this is the way the Author of the *Search after Truth*, and of a *New System of Morality*, and other pieces which are all bottom'd on these pernicious Doctrines, and consequently are all pernicious, and are the more pernicious because writ with Wit and Eloquence, and have many good Things mixt with them, but all tainted with these Wicked Principles; this I say is the way for him to do what is much better than still to go on venting to the World this sugar'd and guilded Poyson.

Not that I would charge him with having directly so Wicked a design; as knowing my self by Experience that one may do thus with the best Intention in the World. For I was my self once in some of these Errors, yet never so far gone as directly to take Reason and its Ideas, much less sensible ones or visible Figures, for God; but I was of Opinion that the Ideas of our Reason were the soundest Light of true Faith; and that to say, the holy Spirit did now a-days enlighten Mens Souls, was meer Enthusiasm, if any more were meant by it, than that the Soul had distinct and clear conceptions of Things; so that then it was my Thought that a clear and distinct conception of Reason, and the Light and Inspirations of the Holy Ghost were one and the same Thing; and so indirectly I deny'd the true God, his true Light and Actings, and set up the Idol of Reason in their stead;

Cogit.

Rat. de

Deo. lib.

II. ch.

4.

and indeed this is what I have publish'd, tho' by the by, without duly considering it, and with the best intention in the World; which yet ought not to excuse me from begging God's Pardon for this detestable Heresy, which I heartily retract and abhor, beseeching God more and more to lighten my darkness with the Light of true Faith, tho' my Foolish Reason neither saw nor understood any Thing of it; and that he would be pleas'd to give those that are on the same Precipice, the Grace to start back, and recover both themselves and others, whom they have mislead: *Errare humanum est, sed in Errore perseverare velle Diabolicum.*

I shall say no more at present upon Reason, with relation to Faith. It would certainly require a Book on purpose, should I go to treat thoroughly of it, and consider it in its consequences and dependences: For the blending and confounding of Reason with Faith, is a Thing of that vast extent, and of such terrible consequences, as can hardly be express'd. But my design being chiefly to treat of true Faith, as a means that includes the whole Co-operation that Man owes to God's Grace, 'tis enough for me to distinguish by way of premise this true Faith from the dead one; and to show that *dead Faith* is nothing but *meer corrupt human Reason as it considers by its own force the Images and Traces that Divine Things have left in it*: That when Men have once embraced this dead Faith, as if it were the divine, true and living Faith, they by degrees come to take for the divine Light of Faith, Human Reason as it Contemplates the pure Ideas of Creatures, first the intellectual and then the corporeal ones; then Faith is quite forgot, and Reason and its Ideas prefer'd before it, even the corporeal ones which are set up as Golden Calves to be worship'd with Prayers and Meditations, which must pass for Christian, and be thought as confidently to be address'd to the Eternal Word, as the *Israelites* Prayers to their Golden Calves were to the true God that had brought them out of the Land of Egypt: *These be thy Gods, O Israel, that brought thee out of the Land of Egypt!* In Truth, this is almost the last degree of blindness, the Mind of Man is capable of falling into, and the fulfilling of what the Apostle said concerning the Master-reasoners of the World, who will needs be intruding their Reason every where; *They grew vain by their Reasonings.* (the Gentlemen of Port-Royal, that are not a little Slaves to Reason, have given this place such a Translation as rather encourages than checks it) and their Heart void of Understanding (the Apostle here distinguishes Reason and its Reasoning from the Understanding) *this Heart of theirs was fill'd with Darkness.* And pretending to be Philosophers or Wise Men, they became Fools and Senseless; and chang'd the Glory of God. (the substance of God, and of the eternal Word) who is not subject to Corruption or Alteration,

Rom. 1.
21, &c.

Chap.
IV.



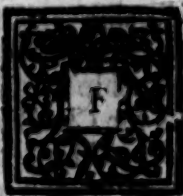
teration, into what is like the Idea or Figure of Corruptible and Mutable Man, and to the likenesses of Birds, and four-footed Beasts and creeping Things, to Things extended and corporeal. Thus changing the Truth of God, (The substance of the Word) into a lyg; and paid that Supreme Worship and Adoration to the Creature which is due only to the Creator, Blessed for ever.

CHAP. IV.

Of a lively and true Faith; and what it is with relation to the desire.

I. In what Sense the true Faith is represented as a Thing that is to cease.

I.



FURTHER to clear up this matter and to remove all Equivocations and Difficulties, that may thence arise, I am to let you know, that the Word *Faith*, even when it signifies the true, denotes sometimes the substance of that Thing as cloath'd with some accidental circumstances that shall cease; and then we say that this Faith, tho' true, shall cease; and this seems contrary to what we all along maintain, that Faith is in corruptible, immutable, eternal, and never to cease. And yet is this really no contradiction; because when we speak of Faith's ceasing, it is not to be understood of the substance and nature of Faith, but only of some of its States or Externals. There is in Faith a state of beginning and littleness (which is like a grain of Mustard, says the Scripture) there is likewise the estate of Progress, and that of Perfection and Dominion. There is that of Desires, Views, Sentiments, only general, confus'd and imperceptible; where the object seems as absent; and there is that of evidence and full enjoyment. Now it is visible that Faith shall pass away and cease as to the first of these States, but shall never cease as to its substance, it being still the same Faith

Faith in substance; that of void, little, confus'd and imperceptible, shall become great, full, evident and perfectly enjoying its delightful and eternal Object, God, and only God.

Chap.
IV.

II. I think I have already (a) taken notice that in Faith there are many Things that we are to consider differently; as for Example, the faculty or subject of Faith and its Act; the object of Faith and Act; the Union or result of the acts of the Subject, and of those of the Object, or Illuminations; and that a Thousand different Things spoken of Faith, are to be understood with respect sometime to one, and sometime to another of these Things, and in divers Senses. This is what 'tis necessary to remember, and therefore 'tis I here again put you in mind of it, to save all needless repetitions for the future. I leave therefore every one to make the necessary Applications for avoiding confusion. For instance, when 'tis said, that *Faith is God himself*, this must be understood of *the Object*; when I say *Faith dyes or ceases*, 'tis to be understood of *the acts of the Faculty*, and of their *Union* with God's act; when I say, that *Faith is more essential to Man than Reason*, this is meant of the *Faculty*; when 'tis said, there is *but one only Faith*, this is meant of the *Object* and of the *act of the Object*; and when 'tis said likewise, that *every one ought to have a proper Faith of his own, and that the just shall live by his own Faith*, and not by anothers, this is understood of the *act of the Faculty*: And so of a Thousand other ways of speaking, wherein 'tis easy at first sight to determine the Sense such Expressions are to be taken in when we are discoursing of Faith.

II. Advise-
ment con-
cerning
many
Things
that must
be consi-
der'd di-
versly in
Faith.

(a) Oe-
con. of
Creat.
ch. 9. n.
6.

III. Tho' the most inward desire of the Soul be what is most fundamental, and principally to be consider'd in the faculty of Faith, yet ought it not to be confin'd to the desire alone. Faith as a faculty is exactly commensurate to the Grace of God, which it is to receive. Now God's Grace does not respect and strengthen the Desire of the Soul only, it directly replenishes all the Divine faculties of the Soul; enlightens the Understanding; calms the Will, or the faculty of *Acquiescence*; and for that Reason, the faculty of Faith is no particular faculty, but a compound of all the Divine

III. What
Faculties
of the
Soul
Faith is
in.

Chap.
IV.

Divine faculties of the Soul, which are reducible to three, the Desire, the Capacity of Understanding, and of Acquiescence. And by thus stating the matter, that Question that has so much puzzled the School-men, may be fairly decided; there is a great dispute among them, whether Faith be in the Understanding or in the Will, or in both; and they are much divided in the point, confuting one another, but laying down nothing clear or certain.

IV. It
will be
necessary
to give
Names to
Faith,
purely to
avoid con-
founding
many
Things
together.

IV. The Desire being the first of the faculties, that is complicated with Faith, we shall begin with the consideration of it, having first premised some considerations, necessary to the more clear and distinct understanding of this matter. Every one knows that Faith is what all Men are oblig'd to, and that God requires it of them; and this is a certain sign, that there are in Faith some acts which it is in Man's Power to perform on their part, and that they cannot omit them without the guilt of not having done what it was in their Power to do. On the other Hand, we are often told by Scripture, that 'tis not of Man to believe, and that Faith is the gift of God; from which we may observe that in the Business of Faith there is something that cannot come from Man, but must be communicated by God alone.

Now both these Truths being equally certain, we should endeavour so to state the Nature or Explication of Faith, as in it to give a fair account how Faith may proceed from Man, since God expects and requires it of him; and also how Faith cannot proceed from Man, but God, according to the Testimony of Scripture.

'Tis evident that to say, and that consistently, such opposite Things concerning Faith, 'tis necessary to distinguish many Things in it, that by considering it sometimes with relation to one, and sometimes to another of these different and opposite Faces, one may by that means be able to make out the different Things we shall say of it. It would not be amiss to give divers Names to Faith according to the different Things to be consider'd in it, since in Truth, these Names, tho' new, make no change in the Things themselves, nor is there any more pretended by

Chap.

IV.

by them, than to use them simply as marks to avoid confusion: So that none ought to be offended if I call the Faith which God requires of Man, and Man is oblig'd for his own part to supply accordingly, *Natural Faith*, or *act of Natural Faith*, or *Active Faith*, since all I would signify by this, is no more than, *the Faith which Man ought to give to God*, and is meerly a Definition of a Word, and should not be disputed; and which does not in the least determine for or against Man's Impotence, which must be infer'd from something else than a purely nominal Definition. And for the same Reason, that which in Faith comes from God alone, and which 'tis not in Man's Power to supply, I will call, *Supernatural Faith*, or *Supernatural act of Faith*, or simply *Divine Faith*, as coming from God only. Possibly these Terms may not be lik'd, but I could light of no fitter after all my search and desire. But yet what matter is it what Terms I pitch upon, since I use them for no other purpose but to avoid Confusion in a subject wherein there are divers Senses and divers Respects? Were it usual to treat of matters of Divinity, as we do of Mathematicks, I might call the Faith, which God requires of Man, *A.* and that which none but God can give, *B.* and then none would have any reason to complain; but I have no mind to make my self ridiculous by such uncouth modes of Speech; I chuse rather more familiar Terms, especially because I shall shew something like them in Scripture, and shall take care to guard my Readers against the ill Sense which the *Pelagian* Heresy might put upon these Words, *Natural Faith*, which I have said I would use. Come we now to the Substantial Observations.

V. I shall not speak of the Faith Man had before the Fall: I suppose that as to him lost and ruined: And that before God's Grace and Operation, fallen Man can do nothing but Sin and Damn himself, as has been shewn in the Two first Chapters of this Treatise.

V. A
Suppositi-
on for
what fol-
lows.

VI. We must remember what has been said in the
and preventing Faith. How all Men have Faith without their
themselves for it, without possessing and without believing.

VI. Of
objective
preparing

Chapter

Chap.
IV.

*Oeconomy
of the
Restorati-
on before
the In-
carnation,
c. vi.
and vii.*

*John i.
v. 5. 9.
11.*

*Oeconomy
of the
Restora-
tion be-
fore the
Incarna-
tion. c.
the vi. n.
5.*

Chapter of Co-operation, and towards the beginning of the third Book, that God comes to insinuate himself into Man amidst his darkness and weakness, to offer him the divine Light, whereof he shews him some Rays, and makes him sensible of the good Motions of it. As this Light is the true Light of Faith, or objective and preventing Faith, it is clear, that in this Sense, before God thus offers his Grace to Men, and insinuates into them the Impressions and inward Principles of Faith, they cannot dispose themselves for it, nor do any good to prepare themselves thereto; for nothing but meer darkness and evil preceeds this coming of Grace and the Light of Faith into the Soul. The Light shines in darkness. And it may be said in the same Sense, that all Men that come into the World and that are in it, have Faith, or the Light of Faith; and that nevertheless they do not believe, and so, that they have not Faith even while they have it, that is to say, that at the very time God offers them the divine Light, they possess it not, they enjoy it not, much less do they render it fruitful; because they do not by their corresponding with it accept of it, or receive it by the active Faith which God exacts of them. St. John says, *That the light which enlightens every Man that comes into the World is come to his own; but his own received him not, and that it shines in darkness, but the darkness comprehended it not, or did not give it admittance; and in many places of the Gospel he gives us to understand, that many had the Light who did not believe in the Light but rejected it, loving their darkness better: and I have elsewhere upon this Subject alledg'd the excellent saying of St. Augustin, *Mecum eras & tecum non eram*. It is with such as with a Man that should have a Field wherein there lay hid a rich Treasure which he would not look after; he would have it without possessing it, and would be poor in the midst of Riches. But as we do not here treat of Faith in this Sense, though in other places we have, we shall content our selves with this short remark we have made of it only to avoid confusion in what follows.*

VII. If, when God has thus prevented Man with the

What we mean by Natural Faith, and how it is in Man's Power to give it to God, who exacts it of him. Grace

Grace of his Light, Man Corresponds or Co-operates after a due manner (for the false Correspondence producing only a dead Faith and some faint velleities comes not under our present consideration) if Man, I say, rightly corresponds with God, by joining his desire and his own act with the light which God discovers to him, and with God, who is the Source of it, or rather, that very Light, then does he exert an act of that Faith which I have called, *Natural* or *Active*. And it consists in this, that the desire of Man, awakned and prevented by God, with its utmost might and efforts tend towards him. I have prov'd speaking of the Co-operation of Man, that this was no more than what he had power to do; not that after sin he could furnish this act out of the stock of his corrupt Nature, consider'd as such, and without God's Grace; but this same Nature as assisted by the Grace of God, which insinuates itself into it, can join its activity of desiring with this Divine Grace, and so produce this act of natural Faith. For as in the state of Integrity it was of the Nature of the Soul to desire the infinite good, that is to say, to exert acts of Faith, which then may be stiled *Natural*; so likewise when God by his Grace does again put the Soul in a condition to produce acts resembling those that are natural to it on the Foot of its first Creation. These Acts and their Principle (the Desire) may well be stiled natural Faith, and Acts of natural Faith, supposing, I say it again, Nature by Grace restor'd or rais'd to such a state or degree as to be able to do this. Hence we see, that this way of expressing *Natural Faith*, has some Foundation, nor is it without Example; for St. Paul says to the same purpose, that some Gentiles do by Nature the things contained in the Law: And without all Dispute the Law of the Love of God may be called a *Natural Law*. Now the Love of God and Faith are in substance the same thing; and so none ought to think it strange that I give the same Appellation to Faith that is given to Love and the Law of Love, and that I speak of *Natural Faith* and of acts of *Natural Faith*. It is not without Reason that I stand so much upon the Justification of a word, which indeed should not be a matter of any difficulty amongst Men of Sense, because I very well

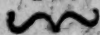
G

know

Chap.
IV.

Rom. 2.
14. 27.

Chap.
IV.



VIII.
*How all
Men, even
the great-
est unbe-
lievers,
may have
Faith.*

know what a noise some turbulent Spirits wou'd otherwise make about it, whom in meer Charity I would willingly hinder from giving themselves or others any disturbance by their vain and groundless Clamours.

VIII. This Faith (which I call Natural or Active) and its acts, are the Faith and the Acts of Faith which God demands of Man. and which Man may give or refuse to God. All Men whenever God makes known himself to them, and discovers to them the Divine Light and Good, are bound to comply therewith by this Faith and by its Acts, so far as God manifests himself to them; and if they do not, they Sin and fail of their Duty; for this is no more than they may do by God's Grace which has prevented them: And in this Sense, it is that all Men may have Faith and Believe if they will, though they be generally through their own fault Unbelievers. But we shall leave the Unbelievers, and speak only of the Faithful and their Faith, upon which we shall make a very material Remark.

IX. *The
capacity
of the
Soul for
the Re-
ception of
God is
much
more no-
bly actua-
ted by
God then
by her
own acti-
vity.*

IX. 'Tis a known Truth that the Soul was created to lodge God in it after a manner worthy of him. For this purpose, God has given it a capacity to contain (if I may so say) to admit, to desire God in such a manner as shall be worthy of God; that is to say, that it is not the Soul alone that moves and exerts within herself the desire after God, but that God has likewise reserved to himself the Power and Will to move and actuate it, to make the desire to desire, or more truly, himself to desire in the Center of the Soul's desire. Now it is certain that in the desire after God (which is in the Soul) the passive part which is put into action by God, is as much exalted above the active (wherein Man's Duty consists) as God is above the Creature; my meaning is, God can act and desire in the Soul infinitely above what the Soul can herself act and desire, or above all the activity and active desires of the Soul. If a Creature therefore has a mind to desire God after a manner worthy of God and most perfect, it must not stop and rest in its own act, that not being the act which is immediately and chiefly the most worthy to receive God. This it may be is what is meant by some, when they say, that what makes us
pleasing

pleasing to God, (or worthy and truly fit to receive and lodge him within us) is not the worthiness of our Faith. But however that be, it is to me an undoubted Truth that the Action of a Creature, though never so much prevented and assisted by God, is not so worthy to receive God, as the Action of God himself; that it is neither infinite, nor perfect to that degree as God's is. And here it is that God must supply what else will ever be wanting to active Faith.

Chap.
IV.

X. In effect, when the Soul on her part does what she can and ought, (I shall by and by speak of the good Conditions the desire of the Soul ought to have to come up to this Point) when she offers and brings the desires that God requires of her, God the Father, (the essential desire of the Deity) insinuates into her and unites itself to her desire in a most special manner; and by this Union, it does not only widen, enlarge and exceedingly lighten the activity of the Soul, but also God of his own Divine Desire and the Soul's making but one and the same whole, the desire of the Soul, or the Faith which I call active and natural, is by that means of natural become Supernatural and Divine; and this is God's work, and above all the Powers of Nature, even in her first Innocence or recover'd Glory.

X. How
the Su-
pernatu-
ral and
divine
Faith of
the desire
is insus'd
into the
Soul by
God the
Father.

And thus it is the Soul comes to the actuation of her infinite capacity and worthy of God, by the Principle and activity of God alone, who acts in Association in her, and makes her desire God in a perfect manner and worthy of God, in union with the act of God himself. This desire infinite and worthy of God, is the first act of a purely Divine Faith, which the Scripture calls likewise a *hunger* and *thirst*, a *longing* and *fainting* after God and his Grace, after the Light of the Son and the Joy of the Holy Ghost; who thereupon come and dwell really and substantially in the Soul, and fill, enliven and modify it after such a bright and delightful manner as can be the effect of nothing but God's immediate presence by his Divine Word and Holy Spirit. But I am not come so far yet.

Mal. 5.
v. 6. Psal
42. v. 3.
Psal. 84.
v. 3.

XI. This Divine Faith is a very special and particu-
the special Gift of God, which Man cannot have of himself tho' he may
prepare himself for it by the good use of God's former Graces.

XI. How
Faith is
he may

Chap.
IV.

lar Gift of God, and comes from God only and not from Man ; and is what God gives not to all, because all do not qualify themselves for the Reception of it ; so that 'tis their own fault if they have it not, though it be not in their Power to give it themselves ; because had they rightly dispos'd and fitted themselves to receive it, as they might have done by their active and natural Faith, God would have given them this also. For there are some Dispositions and Preparations for this altogether Divine and Supernatural Faith, as is clear of itself to any one that understands the Substance and Connexion of the Truths that have hitherto been propos'd.

XII. Ex-
plications
of
many dif-
ficulties
and par-
ticulars
relating
to Faith.

XII. These Truths do in my Judgment serve as a Key to open several Difficulties about Faith, and to let us into the understanding of a great many Passages of Scripture. Methinks, there is nothing now more easy to be understood than this Truth (for instance) I but now touch'd, and which is of so great importance, I mean, that Faith is the Gift of God, and yet that it lies wholly in Man to have it, that if Man does his Part, God will help him and divinely quicken his Faith ; that God is present and ready to do it provided Man desires it ; that Man alone desires only naturally, but that God makes him desire Supernaturally, who before desir'd only actively and naturally.

Jo. 6.
44.

And by this we understand likewise, how it is God that makes us to will after a Divine manner, that is to say, that God makes those desire Divinely and Supernaturally, that desire and will naturally to the utmost of their Power, but not those that do not desire nor will at all. Now; *No Man can come to the Son, except the Father draw him* ; that is, no Man can receive the Light of the Word of God, if he be not prepar'd for it Supernaturally by the infinite Desire and Thirst which the Father raises in him ; for these are the true Attractions of the Father, who is ready to raise them in all such as according to their present ability, (for God requires no more than we have) say to him what the Spouse did in a Supernatural manner, *Draw me, and we shall run after thee*: That it is *the Father that makes us meet to partake of the Light, and that translates us into the Kingdom of his Son*. And that lastly, when the eternal

Cant. 1.
8.
Col. 1.
12.

Word

Word is born in the Soul, it is of the Father and not of the Soul that he is begotten, as also that it is of them that the Holy Ghost is born there; to which agrees admirably well the Apostolick Salutation, *Grace and Peace be with you from God the Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ.* I repeat it again; when I speak here of *Nature*, I mean Nature as considered with the strength that the Grace of God gives it by his Lights and good Motions to raise it up again, or Nature with the first Operations of God in it (of which I have spoken above) and when I speak of what is Supernatural, I mean by it some singular Grace and Acts of God, far surpassing all the former.

Chap.
IV.

XIII. These Truths you see utterly overthrow the false Glosses by which Men often pervert the clearest Texts of Scripture, and thereby strangely perplex the Minds of some. This sets God's Justice, Goodness, Truth and Wisdom, the Duty, Power and Impotence of Man to save himself, the fundamental Reasons of guilt or inexcusableness, and of Rewards and Punishments, and of several other matters in a Light where all difficulties vanish. But especially, this destroys that pernicious and desperate Error, that Men not being able of themselves to have Faith (which is indeed true, God gives it, nay and has decreed from all Eternity to give it by an unaccountable and humorous Will, to one rather than to another, though there be no inequality or difference of Dispositions in them. A false and ridiculous Conceit this, which yet they cover under the specious Phrases of *God's incomprehensible Judgments and of his good Pleasure*, and such like, taken from Scripture; as if under pretence of incomprehensibility we might take what liberty we pleas'd to invent unintelligible Whimsies, and then charge God with 'em for this admirable Reason because they are incomprehensible! and as if God's good pleasure were the good-pleasure of some capricious and fantastical Being, and not the good-pleasure of a God, Just, Wise, Good, and exactly Harmonious and Agreeing with himself, who can be pleas'd with nothing in the matter of Communion and Commerce which he holds with his Creatures but what agrees with the state of such Creatures.

above, ch.
II. n. 22,

XIII. O-
ther con-
sequences
of these
truths
God does
not with
partiality
give Faith

XIV.
Applica-
tions of
this to
the diffi-
culties
concern-
ing Pray-
er, and
to the
Impotence
and Pow-
er of
Man in
certain
cases.

XIV. Add we yet a word or two, by way of Reflection, concerning Prayers, seeing Desire and Prayer is the same thing. 'Tis commonly said, that Men if they will have God's Graces, (that of Light, and even of Divine Prayer) they must ask and pray for it; but that they cannot pray except God give the Grace to pray, which Grace yet, they say too, he is not pleas'd to give to all; and yet say the *Jansenists*, God wills the Salvation of all, or gives Grace to all. Certainly, it was not without reason that Father *Malebranche* calls the Doctrine of the *Jansenists* concerning Grace, a meer empty sound of words. Only he should have said too, that his own compar'd with what he teaches concerning the activity of Second Causes, which he flatly denies, as likewise that the Soul can modify or act upon herself (which is a plain denial of her Liberty) is much more so than that of the *Jansenists*. But to clear up these and the like Difficulties concerning Grace and Prayer, we need only instead of the word *Prayer* put that of *Desire*, and then read over again what has been said in the foregoing Paragraphs. There we shall see how there are *Natural Prayers*, and what they are (but in quite another Sense then what our new Philosophers take them in.) We shall see, that these Prayers are within Man's Power; that they are not meritorious of Grace; but that God nevertheless joining with them the special Grace of his own Divine Desire, or of Supernatural Prayer, we are by the Grace of this Divine Desire, made meet to receive the Grace of Light and of Love, which afterwards act reciprocally one upon the other, and mutually excite each other; and so upon their Union, the last stirs up and awakens the first. And thus 'tis that St. Paul says, *We know not how to ask or pray as we ought, but that 'tis the Spirit of God that prays in us with desires or groans that cannot be utter'd.*

Rom. 8.
v. 25.

Luke 11
v. 9, and
13.
Matth. 3.
and 3.

Hence we may understand how our Saviour would have us pray before we have receiv'd the Holy Spirit, that we may receive it: assuring us that God will give it to them that ask it of him. And in this manner are we to understand, how Sinners not yet converted pray to God for their Conversion; and how upon God's commanding them, *Turn unto me and I will turn to you;*

you; they also say to him, *Turn us and we shall be turned*; that is to say, "Change, O Lord, the natural Desires, Wishes and Prayers of our Heart, so far as our Nature and our Activity prevented by thy former Graces is able to form them and to have them, change them by a new effusion of thy Grace into Desires and Inclinations Supernatural and Worthy of thee. Make our Wills, whose Activity is so imperfect, to will Supernaturally. Incline Supernaturally our Wills to thy fear, since a natural, servile or mercenary fear is not worthy of thee. *Turn away* (says David) *my Heart and my Eyes* (or my desire) *from vanity*; but by an aversion Supernatural and and Divinely strong, and infinitely exceeding the weak and petty efforts that I make to turn them away as well as I can by the help of thy former preventing Graces.

Chap.
IV.Jerem.
31, 18.Ps. 119.
37.

And thus it appears for several Reasons, how without God's Grace, without God who gives himself, and who does himself operate in Man, before and after, a first and a second, and an infinite number of Times more, we are not able to desire any Thing, or do any Thing as we ought, in a manner worthy of God and that can stand before him; that we cannot will nor know, nor Love any Thing by a true Light; cannot do any Thing by Motions truly Divine and worthy of God. 'Tis he therefore that is our sole and only sufficient aid, according to that excellent and inestimable saying of the great Apostle. *We are not able of ourselves to think any Good as of ourselves, but our sufficiency is of God.*

2 Cor,
3. 5,

And yet ought Man truly and properly to *Work* in his Salvation; and indeed it is his duty to *Work* for this very Reason, *because it is God that Works in him both to will*, (the good Passive Desires and Motions by which he is prevented) *and to do* (Faith and Supernatural Acts) *according to his good Pleasure*. And so, the Learn'd after all their subtle disputes concerning these Matters are fain to come down to the knowledge and sayings of the Common sort of Honest People, who bring in God thus speaking to Man. *Help thy self and I will help thee*. In a Word, if Man does his endeavour with his Divine Faculties, if he do

Chap.
IV.



what in him lyes, (and God requires no more than a Man has, the Heart that he has, the Soul such as he has, and the strength such as it is, and so of the rest) if I say he do actively and as far as he can what is in his Power, by the first Grace and Operation of God, then does God do what Man cannot, and what is beyond the Power of Creatures; and turns the Human Force into Divine. Judge by this what we are to think of the possibility or impossibility of keeping God's Commandments, of the validity or vanity of Mens excuses; of Man's Power or Weakness; of the Divine Justice, Equity, Grace and Rewards, and of other Matters of like Affinity.

If I must needs be told again, that thus I give too much Power to the Creature; I must e'en say again, that I ascribe no more to it than what God has given it Power to do, either at his first making it of a Divine Nature, or at his re-enslating it, after its Fall, in this Power: And that after all that has at so many several times been said to set this matter in a clear Light, still to be raising scruples is no sign of any great Penetration.

XV. Con-
ditions of
the Souls
Desire
founded
in the
Divine
Order.

XV. I come now to the Conditions of the Desire, by me stil'd Natural. Nor do I reckon among its Conditions that of its being carried to Light and Good, or its desiring Light and Good in general. This is the Nature of the Desire, and not one of the Conditions of its Conduct. 'Tis impossible the center and ground of the Soul should in general desire any Thing else, no not in Devils. This is its immutable Nature, without which there could be neither Happiness nor Misery: For could the fund of the desire be inclin'd to and desire Evil, might it acquiesce in Evil, which is as much as to say, it might be happy in Misery, and well in the midst of ill, which is a contradiction. Again, the Soul would not be an extract of God, nor of a Divine Nature, could it desire Evil absolutely and simply: For the most radical and essential ground (as I may say) of the Divinity, is to desire Light and Acquiescence. Therefore the Nature and Essence of the Desire, is to desire in general the good and the bright Tranquility. But there are Conditions of this Desire relating to its management, and these founded in the immutable

table order that is in God, and in that which he has establish'd in the Creation of Things.

XVI. The first Condition of the Desire is, that it be void of self or of the Soul that desires. That is to say, that the Soul be not herself the Object of her own desire, as if it were in her own Nature, in her own natural Power and Constitution that she could find the bright good to which she is naturally and confusedly carried. By the same Reason the Desire must likewise be void of all Creatures whatever, and all that belongs to Creatures. This is the first requisite, and the Foundation-Stone of Faith, and of all Divine Virtue and Morality. The Reason of this is grounded on an immutable order, not of certain habitudes or positive Properties of Creatures, or of Ideas of Creatures (for these Reasons reach not the root of Things which yet they that give them pretend to do) but in an order that is in God himself before there was any Idea of Creatures. For necessarily and according to immutable order, all Ideas of Creatures apart, God only is a Being that has himself for the Object of his desire: He it is, that is satisfied with himself, and that makes his Light and his Peace spring up in himself. None can do this; for none is the being sufficient to itself and by itself. Therefore the desire of the Creature ought not to tend to itself, nor to any Creature; seeing they and the Ideas of All Things are but Nothings before the absolute and self-sufficient Being.

XVII. He that carries his desire towards Created Things, is doubly incapable of admitting God or the Light of Faith: For first his Desire alone, consider'd by itself and without the assistance of God's Desire, is not proximately capable of it, as has been said; and in the second place, as the Creatures on which he sets his Desire, make Impressions on it suitable to their low and limited Nature, and as he fits and proportions his Desire to them, he is as incapable of receiving God as giving Light and Joy, as a small Vessel full of Trash, close shut and sunk in Filth, is of receiving in it the Sun and all the Stars of Heaven. For this Reason to arrive at Faith, there must proceed a true renunciation and an entire turning away from self, from the

Chap.
IV.

XVI.
First requisite of the Desire: That it be empty of Creatures.

XVII.
By this vacuity alone are we duly disposed to Faith.

Chap. the Goods, Pleasures, Honours and Thoughts of this
 IV. World, and from the Ideas of all Creatures; so fond and vain is it to pretend to come to the Knowledge of the Truth which is God, and to Divine Communication with it, by the Chimerical means of certain pretended natural Prayers, or a desire to discover the relations of the Ideas of Reason, which they pretend are God himself. 'Tis just the contrary, and by the rejection of these Fooleries, that the first Preparation to true Faith, and to the solid Knowledge of Truth is to be made.

XVIII. XVIII. A second Condition of the Desire to render it fit to be join'd with God's, is, that it turn itself towards God, after it is turn'd away from self and all Creatures. And upon such turning away this other necessarily follows. For there being nothing but the Creator and Creatures, to turn from these is to turn towards him. This is no hard matter. After God has touch'd the Soul with his Light and preventing Motions: After which, all that is in the Soul suggests to it to turn to God, as the fulness of all Good. The emptiness of the Soul does in a manner teach it the fulness of God, as the capacity of a Vessel gives an Idea of the greatness of that which is to fill it, and as the hollow engravings of a Seal shew the form of the Body that is to receive the impression. Besides, her Knowledge and Consciousness that she is not made by herself, nor by herself made of such a Nature, gives her a general Sense and Conception of her Author; and she knows and feels moreover, that this Author of her Being raises in her a desire to be infinitely enlighten'd, pleas'd or satisfied. She can therefore address herself to him that he would be pleas'd to finish his own work in her, and as he has given her the Desire and

Phil. 2. the *Will*, so he would likewise grant the *Doing* also, the enjoyment and satisfaction. And in some such manner as 'this may every one, tho' otherwise in never so great Darkness, put up a true natural Prayer. "He may say to God with Desire, Thou, that hast given me a Nature full of Desires, for a Good above my Conception, and which I am not yet possess'd off, (and this privation is my Torment and Misery) come O Thou framer of my Nature, and perfect thy Work

"Work in me, and give me what thou mak'st me
"to Desire." What hinders but a *Turk*, or *Hea-*
then may make such a Prayer, and thereby be brought
into the Light of Faith, thus knocking at the Door
which will certainly be open'd to him by God, who
is liberal to all that call upon him.

Chap.
IV.

XIX. A third Condition of the Desire, is, that it
come accompanied with the faculties of the Under-
standing and Acquiescence. All the other faculties are
low and for the Creatures: These are Divine and for
God. When therefore the Desire of the Soul is
turn'd away from the Creatures, and turn'd towards
the Author of her Nature, to find in him Light and
rest, it is in the three first Conditions that prepare it
for true Faith.

XIX.
Third
Condition
of the
Desire:
That it
bring to
God the
under-
standing
and Acquiescence of
the Soul.

XX. A fourth is, that the desire do not determine
or particularise, its Understanding or Will: That is,
that it Desire not to know in God, or concerning God
this or that, after this or that manner, to have this
Sensation, the kind of Joy, of Tranquility and Ac-
quiescence, with such and such circumstances. All that
we can think, desire, or imagine of our selves concern-
ing God, all the conceptions we can form to our selves
of his Light, Beauty, Joy, Pleasures, and his other
Perfections are but Fictions and Chimera's unworthy
God, who is infinitely above all the Notions and Re-
presentations our activity can form of him. We do
but shake and dirty the Canvas, or the fund of our
Soul, and hinder God from drawing on it his Divine
and lively Image, by the Clouds we are continually
casting up, and fashioning after our manner. Hence fur-
ther appears the absolute necessity of the rest and quiet,
of the Powers of the Soul, and that of the Superior
too, for such are the Understanding and Will.

XX.
Fourth
Condition
of the
Desire,
that it
offer not
to parti-
cularise
its Un-
derstand-
ing or
acqui-
esence.

XXI. A fifth Condition of the Desire, is, that it be
sincere, resolute and full. And this it will be if it
have passed the four Degrees or Forms before men-
tion'd.

XXI.
Fifth
Condition-
on, Sin-
cerity and Fulness.

XXII. A

XXII.
Sixth
Condi-
tion, Dura-
tion and
Constancy.

XXII. A sixth Condition, is, that it be dureable and constant for some time, and not changeable at the very first. God very well desires to be sought for some time; and the Desire that should presently enjoy him, would not sufficiently value the favour, and would to its irreparable loss be soon depriv'd of it for want of such due esteem.

XXIII.
Seventh
Condi-
tion, confi-
dent
Trust.

XXIII. Lastly, the Desire must entirely and confidently resign and trust itself in the Hands of God's Desire, or of God the Father, of God desiring himself in a manner worthy of himself; that by his uniting his essential Desire with ours, he may make us desire Divinely, and as he pleases; assuring our selves that he will do all well, and that he can do nothing but what is so; and 'tis from this *confident remitting* of our Desire to God, that Faith has its Name of Trust or Confidence.

XXIV.
Accept-
tance
of the
Soul's
Desire by
God the
Father,
and his
further
raising
of it.

XXIV. When the Desire is come thus far, God the Father receives it, fortifies and enlarges it, joins and unites it to his own, so that now it is but one and the same Desire with his. Then God sets the * *Heart at Liberty*, and in a large room as *Dauids* Expression is. He makes us Desire God, the Son and Holy Spirit, above all that the Heart of Man can conceive or think. Then is Man's Desire animated by God's, become wholly Divine, and natural Faith is passed into a Supernatural, Divinely living and saving Faith, which, tho' infinite, does yet infinitely encrease.

* Psalm

119. 32. 45.

XXV.
Descrip-
tion of
Faith as
it relates
to the
Desire.

XXV. Faith then with respect to the Faculty of the Desire, which is the first and most intimate Power of the Soul, *Is a Desire turn'd away from Creatures to the Creator, in whom we seek what Light and rest he pleases, but with Sincerity, Fulness and Constancy, and with a confident Resignation of our Heart; which design is animated, govern'd, and modify'd by the substantial Presence of God the Father, together with the Son and Holy Ghost.*

Of Faith, as it respects the Understanding.

XXVI. Let us now consider Faith as it respects the Understanding, and afterwards as it respects the Acquiescence or Will, for to these Faculties it extends also.

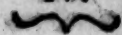
XXVI.
Two Con-
ditions
on which
the Un-
derstand-
ing of
the Soul
is invest-
ed with
Divine
Faith.

The Understanding, to pass into the order of Faith must have these two Conditions: The first, that it be empty, and shut to all Ideas of all Worldly Things, both Heavenly and Earthly; the second, that it keep itself open before God after an indeterminate and general manner, not particularly fixing upon any Thing. This being suppos'd, with the Faith of Desire aforementioned. God causes to arise in the Soul his Divine Light, which is his Eternal, substantial Word, which does himself modify (if I may so say) or rather fills and quickens the Understanding of the Soul, and enlightens it as he pleases. We shall briefly resume these three Points, the emptiness of the Understanding, its standing open, or its inactivity, and the enlightening of it by the substantial Light of God, to clear some Obscurities, and remove some Difficulties relating to them.

XXVII. The first Condition the intellect ought to have to be capable of the Light of Faith, purely Divine, is its vacuity. This supposes the intellect has been fill'd as indeed it has, before several ways: For since the Fall, the Darkness, Fictions, and Chimera's, of the Fancy, Imagination and Reason have drown'd the intellect, and indeed taken its place: And ever since God has call'd back the Soul either by his inward Light alone, or together by the means of the outward Word, or by what other ways, there always remain'd in the Soul a number of Images, more or less, according as she had more or less exercised her activity about them. Now that the intellect may be enlighten'd with the pure Light of God, or which is the same Thing, may be put into the state of pure Faith, 'tis necessary that all this be first thrown out; not that we can or ought instantly to suppress all these Images; but the Soul must turn away from them as much as possible;

XXVII.
First Con-
dition.
The eva-
cuation
of the
Intellect.

Chap.
IV.



XXVIII.

We are not to strip ourselves of the Light, but of our imperfect manner of receiving it, and of all that is Foreign and may be mixt with it.

possible; and as for such as obstinately present themselves, she must not fix nor reflect on them. There is no Question but thus it must be done to the Darkness, Fictions, and Ideas of our corrupt Fancy and Reason; but there may be some doubt whether we should proceed thus with the particular Lights and Knowledge of good Things; we have receiv'd by God's former calls.

XXVIII. There are many Things to be consider'd in these former and preventing Light: receiv'd from God. First there is God's Light itself; then there is our manner of receiving it; and lastly there is the use, or more truly the mixture we have made of it with our own acts. The Light of God must never be evacuated, but faithfully preserved, and the encrease of it heartily desir'd; and upon this account it is. I mean that it may the more spread in us, that we must rid our selves of all that is not this pure Light, and that would lessen and weaken it. As to our own manner of conceiving this Light, that being very narrow, and the activity of our Spirit, our Searches, Meditations, Notions and Reasonings, tho' proceeding with all imaginable caution, only confining and limiting this Light, we must needs by such ways as these receive it but very scantily; so that we must necessarily quit all our own active, particular and stinted ways of thinking, if we would ever receive Faith in its Fulness and Purity. And this so much the rather, because in the third place, we have of our own added and mingled with it a Thousand Fictions, Errors, Prejudices, Fancies, and Thoughts wholly Foreign to it, all which must necessarily be laid aside if we would enjoy the pure Light of Faith. Look we but, for Example, on the Christians of our Days, as much call'd as they are by the inward Light of their Conscience, and by the means of Holy Scripture: Yet good God! what a *Babel* of Confusion are they! Nothing but dissention, contradictions, swarms of Opinions, and those terribly different; and yet every one fancies he has Faith; tho' there is hardly one of a Thousand that has it truly, because they took not the right way to attain it, nor put in Practice this healthful evacuation of the intellect, by which retaining what is indisputably Divine Light, a
Man

Man divests himself of his own imperfect modes, and of the Ideas and Fancies of the Human Spirit.

Chap.
IV.

XXIX. Nor is this so hard to do for any one that will but set about it with the help of God's Grace. We may easily enough discern the Lights of God which we must always keep from the Things, we must lay aside and empty our selves of either for a time, or for ever. There is an unquestionable generality in the Light of God which every one is satisfied with, that has been mov'd by God, and that draws nigh to him (for of such only I now speak.) For instance, there is no Christian of Good Will, of whatever party he be, that is not convinc'd that there is a God, powerful, wise, just, good and true, that ought to be lov'd and obey'd, who alone can save us, and that in the Holy Scripture are contain'd the means that bring us again to him. And these are the general Lights I will always keep, and never evacuate my self of. And to keep these it is not necessary that I think of them particularly and in that limited manner I us'd to do. It is enough to have in general, in the presence of God the intention to acknowledge all that was true and divine in what we formerly knew, referring our selves to God as to what that might be, and expecting from him, both in that and in whatever else he shall please, larger and purer illuminations.

XXIX.
How to
separate
the un-
question-
able
Lights of
God from
those we
may have
pervert-
ed; and
how to
know
these last.

But as for the particular Propositions and Disputes about certain properties of God, and about the Trinity, about his Decrees, and the Person of *Jesus Christ*, concerning the manner of our Redemption, and a Thousand other matters of Dissention and Controversy, what shall I do, supposing I should have a mind to try this way of finding the Truth? A Hundred Parties among Christians, and more yet among the Learn'd, have been for these many Ages, and still are at strife about them. Shall I rank my self under some one Party of them, or rather shall I stick to the Opinions of the Party I have been bred up in? But this would be meer fondness, and an effect of chance, and of my carnal Birth: For by the same Reason, had I been bred up in any other Party, it would have been my Duty to have embraced all its Opinions: Which surely is very far from Divine Faith. Shall I then
amuse

Chap.
IV.

amuse my self to examine all the Disputes upon the Holy Scriptures, by the help of my own Reason? This would be but time lost and a spring of Errors. It may be my Reason may lead me into more Sophisms and Heresies in such Points than have ever been yet in any or all the Sects together. And after all, tho' I should examine by my Reason without the least slip, all the Subjects of Scripture and Divinity, this would not beget in me true Faith, but a dead one only, such as Devils and Magicians, have or may have. This is all but the Work of Human Reason, and widely distant from the Divinity of Faith. Shall I then stick to my former Opinions, which I verily thought were Divine Truths? But if I consider that my Reason corrupt, sick, full of Errors, Prejudices and Darknes, had a great hand in them all; that my Sins and Passions may have oblig'd God's Justice to deny me in several Things the pure Light of Truth, and suffer me to fall into many Errors, as I have very well deserv'd; I shall have great cause to mistrust all my former and particular Knowledges, even such as to me seem'd most Divine, and to fear, that there is not so much as one of them wherein I have not mixt some Darknes, some Errors, some inventions or other purely my own.

What therefore shall I do? shall I go to the Learned for instruction in this case? then I should be a Fool indeed; I who know the Scripture so much declares against them, and that am not Ignorant that God is the Father of Lights and that he gives Wisdom to those that ask him. I will do Men and my own Thoughts right. That is, I will leave them and apply my self to God; and quitting all particular Thoughts of my own concerning the Divine Matters in dispute, and even concerning such are not disputed, I will ask of him with the most pure, the most sincere, the most constant and fervent Desire I am able, that he would vouchsafe to grant me his most adoreable Lights in what it is his Will I should know, that I may please him and no more: That so my Light may be no longer the barren and dim Light of my weak Reason, but a lively and fruitful Operation of his Divine Spirit. And because he is the God of Truth and

Love

Love, he will grant me this and more. And then, whether my Lights be conformable to those of Synods or Doctors, or contrary to them, I shall not much trouble my self, inform'd as I am, that most of them were hot Men, and too much led by Interest and Passion.

Chap.
IV.

And so much for the first of the Conditions of the intellect with regard to Faith. This wholesome vacuity is the first step towards entering into God's School and becoming his Scholar; 'tis this renders the Soul teachable and proper to receive the impressions it shall please God to make upon it. Fulness, and that conceited stiffness that ever attends it are Qualities directly opposite to those that should be in a seeker of Truth, but docility pleases God.

The usefulness of this vacuity.

XXX. Nor is it enough to be thus in waiting upon God in vacuity as to what is past, unless we likewise both for the present and future, keep our will from choosing and determining of itself, the Lights Divine which we expect. The intellect must stand open and inactive before God, without particularizing any Thing whatever of its own Head. This second Condition is no less necessary to Faith than the former, nor should any one stick at this, who knows that the intellect is purely Passive as to Faith, and that it belongs to God alone to act by the Divine Light upon the Passiveness of our Mind. I am persuaded no Divine, nor indeed

XXX. Second Condition: Inactivity of the Soul expos'd to the Light of God. That God alone enlightens the Soul.

Christian, ever question'd this fundamental Truth, which yet is the least follow'd and practis'd of any. I remember upon this occasion the complaint of Epictetus, that Men in his time plac'd the main of their Philosophy in Speculations and Demonstrations, to which yet they practis'd the quite contrary: *Mentimur quidem: Quomodo autem demonstretur non esse mentiendum in promptu habemus.* So we, we set our Intellect to Work and Labour upon Things Divine; we chuse our Subjects, and by our own Industry, frame Notions of them, and after our own Will, and would fain force them upon others too; and yet we have ready at hand very strong demonstrations to prove, that it is God's part alone to act upon the Mind, and to enlighten it as to what concerns the saving Lights and Truths of Faith. I shall give you one of these demonstrations,

Epict. Enchir. ch. 76.

Chap.
IV.



XXXI.
That af-
ter being
thus emp-
ried, or
professing
so to be,
we must
not fill our
Minds,
nor desire
God to
fill them
according
to our
own Will.

monstrations, and that a principal one. It is certain that the Light of Faith is God himself, or the Son and eternal Word of God, enlightening the Soul in which he dwells. Now no Soul can produce nor make God by its own industry and activity. For the Creature cannot produce the Creator. Therefore it ought to forbear to go about to produce or make his Light spring up in her; and so ought to stand waiting and open before him.

XXXI. If after having made this first step, that is, after having perform'd, or begun in some measure to perform the first Condition above mention'd, if after having exercised some acts of emptying our Minds, we should fall in the second, either by filling our Minds our selves, or desiring of God to fill them after our own Will and Prescription, this would be but like the Dog that returns to his Vomit; or like the *Israelites*, that having left *Egypt* and their *Flesh-pots* would fain have God feed them in the *Wilderness* with their old Diet; and they had their Wish, and are 'till they surfeited on their Dainties. Had they not better have rested satisfied that God the Fountain of Life, and stay of Heaven and Earth, was pleas'd to be among them, he, who could sustain them by his powerful Word, without any sensible Food, and such as gratifies the *Flesh*, or could give them such as in his Divine Wisdom he saw best for them. So likewise ought not we to be satisfied that God himself is pleas'd to dwell in the Heart by Faith, and to trouble ourselves no further by our own Labour and after our own Wills to feed our Understanding with this and t'other Thing we like best, seeing the sole consideration of God's Presence in us is enough to support Men and Angels without any other particular Idea or Sensation; and that when God sees any are necessary, he will be sure in his own way so far to give them, provided we continue in vacuity and expectation before him, and make no choice of our own Heads.

Pf. 31.
II.

Open thy Mouth and I will fill it.
But here our Behaviour is very Pleasant. We do both in our Private and Publick Confessions own that as to the discovering the Truths of Di-
vine

vine Scripture, after a saving manner, our Understandings are naturally full of Errors, and Ignorance; and yet without thinking of him that makes the Light, that says, *Let there be Light, and that shines in Hearts to give the Knowledge of Jesus Christ*, every one betakes himself to his own Strength, and to his own Understanding by his own activity to make the true Light arise. 'Tis plain what we would be at. We long for Quails as the Children of Israel did. Having left, as we think, the Egypt of Paganism, to be under the conduct of a God that will feed our Souls with the simplicity of his Truth, we yet desire to be fed after the Egyptian, after the Pagan Fashion, after the mode of Worldly Science and Subtily, and to every ones particular relish: We will have fine and delicate Thoughts, pretty little Birds, brisk and lively, cover'd with the Plumes of Human Eloquence, flying as they list in the Air of vain Minds, and then are taken and dress'd with several Sauces to the Palate of our old Adam! And of these Men Eat heartily; but then they burst with Vanity, Pride, and even with Animosity, Hatred, Envy and Rage against one another, as is apparent in all the different Sects of Christianity that indulge this way of feeding their Minds.

King of Power and Glory, Sun of Righteousness and Salvation, be thou for ever Blessed, for that there neither is nor can be any but only thyself that can'st enlighten Souls, on purpose that they should always remain in continual dependance on thee, in reliance and in humility, in continual Renunciation and Turning away from themselves, and their self-love, well knowing, that the Spirit which was made for God, cannot be fed with Bread of Man's giving, but only with the Word that cometh out of the Mouth of God, with the inward and divine Word which God speaks and gives birth to in the bottom of the Heart resign'd to him. Let us lay our Hand upon our Conscience, and confess, that all the Light and Knowledge we have gotten by our endeavours, even such parts of it as are Thought most Divine, tho' they were not sullied with Error, nor mingled with our own Fancies and Darkness, are only dead and barren Notions, that in time of tryal are of no Force nor Vertue; and which if they do

Chap.
IV.

2 Cor.
4. 6.

It is well there is none but God alone that can in a saving manner enlighten the Soul. Why the Lights that Men have at present are so fruitless.

Chap.
IV.

not puff us up with Vanity, do but render us inexcusable and guilty of the violation of known Truth. And why is it thus? Because instead of having kept and still keeping ourselves in God's Presence in vacuity of Soul, and in expectation of the pure Light of his Spirit, we have, on the first glimpse of a beam from him, and often of a flash of false Light from Satan or from our own Imaginations, had recourse to our corrupt Reason, to our own Ways and Thoughts, and to our Human Judgment, pretending in them to receive the Divine Truth, and there Season it after our own mode. Now God will by no means give his Blessing to this procedure; for so he would contribute to our making an Idol of our own Understanding; and therefore all these Notions and all this sort of Knowledge continue dead and ineffectual. But it is not so with the pure Light that comes only from God: Life and Power, that are inseparable from God, are as inseparable from as it is from God.

XXXII.
Difficulty about the inactivity and quiet of the Mind. State of the Excursion.

XXXII. It will be objected may be to what has been said, that this second Condition requir'd here of the intellect that means to be enlighten'd by Faith, is a state of Idleness, time lost, and that 'tis an absurd Thing not to make use of the Understanding and Faculties God has given us, nor so much as endeavour to excite in our Minds good and bright Thoughts. Here are several Things tack'd together, and most of them beside the purpose. For at present I am not treating of the means by which one may be introduc'd, or rather brought as 'twere to the Threshold of Faith, as I may say: Nor of that imperfect and beginning Faith, by me stiled active. Nor yet, do I say, that when one has been enlighten'd by the Light of God, one is not to fix ones Mind to the consideration of the Lights held out by God: But what I say is this: I suppose a Man has already had some glimpse of the Divine Light by the call of preventing Grace, and that he has actively Co-operated with it, by turning his Understanding towards it, with particular Desires of such and such Lights, and moreover that to confirm himself therein, he has deduced in his Reason and his other inferiour Faculties, Notions, Ratiocinations, Images, and Words, and other particular Exercises, wherein

wherein he has been exercis'd long enough to be capable of ascending to the state of a pure and altogether Divine Faith. Upon this Supposition, the Question is, whether one whose Faith has as yet been but Weak, and the small Light he has had clouded and mixt with great Darknes, Prejudices and Errors, designing to clear the Principles of the Light he has from the fore-said mixture, and desiring to see this Divine Light in its purity and more fully, whether I say, to this end, he ought to apply thereto the activity of his understanding, of his Meditations, Reflections and Reasonings; or else, whether all this apart, he ought to offer his Understanding in vacuity and silence to the Son of God, the Sun of Righeousness and the true Light of Souls? And this last is what we affirm, and against which the Objections alledg'd are of no force.

Chap.
IV.

XXXIII. For *There is a time for all Things. A time to Speak, and a time to be Silent.* A time to act and a time to cease from action: A time to use endeavours, and a time to wait and expect. Silence, rest and waiting in Season, is not idleness nor loss of time. When they are observ'd by one that is Sick, so that he neither speaks or stirs, nor waits either for his Physick or the working of it, or for his Health, he does not lose his time; on the contrary, he employs it well considering his Condition, and does no more than is absolutely requisite for the recovery of his Health. Just so it is with the Soul whose understanding and all the rest of its Faculties are in ill state and spiritually Sick, when it is in Season silent and stands waiting upon God, without acting; so far is it then from losing its time, that on the contrary it does by that means fit it self for the Acquisition of such Treasures as all the activity and industry of Men and Angels could never attain: 'Tis true, that during the time of this inactive state, which sometimes lasts a considerable while, there is nothing of that particular Knowledge, and of other small and weak advantages got which might have been gain'd by following the way of activity: But when God has had sufficient proof of the Patience and Constancy of the Soul in denying itself and waiting solely upon him, he quickly makes up that

XXXIII.
Quiet of
Spirit in
Season,
much
more ad-
vantagi-
ous than
the rest-
less La-
bours of
Men.
Eccl. 3.
1.

Chap.
IV.

loss, and gives to the Soul in the twinkling of an Eye more Light and Strength than could have been acquir'd, I do not say in Ten Thousand Years, but in an Eternity of Studies and Endeavours of our own. For the least Lights and the least Emanations of God when pure, or receiv'd purely, exceed all the Operations of Men and Angels. And lastly, this is not a Thing of doubtful Issue, but is as certain as certainty itself, after the Soul is duely prepared, and has with constancy fixt her Eyes upon God. *They look'd unto thee and were enlighten'd,* says the *Psalmist*; and this is the third Thing to be consider'd in Faith of the Intellect.

XXXIV.
Third
Thing in
Faith of
the In-
tellect.
The Birth
and Pre-
sence of
the Son
of God in
the Soul.

XXXIV. And it is that the Son of God himself, the Divine Word, the substantial Light of the Divinity, comes into the Soul by a most inward and central Birth, the very same in substance, but of Grace in Souls, as it is in God by Nature. The Truth of this Birth and Presence of the Son of God in the Soul is not at all to be doubted. Mans Soul was made on purpose to be the Basis and Dwelling place of the Son of God, and if it receive him not in consequence of the Divine Faith of Desire qualified as is mention'd above, and when the understanding lies open to him emptied of all other Light, 'tis impossible he should ever be receiv'd; for there cannot be either in Heaven or Earth, a Disposition fitter to receive him than that is. But the Scripture will not suffer us to Question, *but Jesus Christ dwells in Hearts by Faith.* He himself assures us that he is there with his Father. *If any Man love me (with that ardent and sincere Desire aforementioned) he will keep my Sayings, and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him and make our abode in him.* His last Prayer is yet more patheticall on this Subject. But I forbear all further Quotations.

Eph. 5.
17.
Joh. 14.
23.
Joh. 17.
11, 21,
23, 24,
26.

XXXV.

Why the
Birth and
Presence
of God in
the Soul,

XXXV. We must not wonder if the Birth and Presence of the Son of God in the Soul, being the same in substance, that it is in his Divine Father, yet appears and is felt so differently in the Soul; and appears so different from what it is in God, tho' in substance it be the very same.

indeed

indeed is so insensible and obscure. God is Omnipotent and can Communicate himself so as not to be perceiv'd in his full extent, and he knows his Reasons for this Dispensation, whereof some are not unknown to us: For we know, that the Souls of the Faithful are in this Life Subject to the common lot of being fasten'd to a gross Body, that stupifies them, and makes them insensible even of the Things that are most within them; pretty near as in the Oeconomy of Corporeal perception, we have no Sense at all in our Body, dull and heavy as it is, of the Things that are most closely united to it, and are in the very Bowels of it, as are the Motion of the Animal Spirits, the Communication of them, and of the Nourishment, Health itself, and almost all the Vital Operations.

What wonder then if it be in proportion the same in the Oeconomy of the Soul, during its union with so brute a Mass, that must needs render her less quick and sensible in Spirituals. Besides, since the Fall, the Soul is upon her own account also extream weak and gross, and very incapable of supporting the pure rays of the Divinity. Lastly, God's design is by this obscure and imperceptible Presence to preserve Man from Pride and from the Fall of the Devils, a Peril we are expos'd to as long as this mortal Life lasts, after which we shall see God and his Divine Light, without vail, and with open Face, says the Scripture, and have the full sight of the Treasure we here truly possess'd but under a covering.

XXXVI. When the Word of God is thus in Man's Spirit, he is not there without acting therein, that is to say, without enlightening it continually, to transform it from glory to glory, till it becomes bright as God by the Light of God; so that this Illumination which is essentially one; yet has its manners or degrees, and as it were a kind of Course or Period, which God varies and dispenses diversly, according as Man begins to enter into this state, or as God has a design to ground and confirm him in it, or to prove or exercise him in it, or to give him a taste of some of the Fruits of his being confirm'd therein; which are so many kinds of Stations, as I may say, according to which God in divers manners enlightens the Soul.

XXXVI.
*Several
general
ways
whereby
God en-
lightens
the Soul.
Fund.
Object,
and All
of Intel-
lectual
Faith.*

Chap.
IV.

But it must be observ'd, as a most Fundamental point that in all this, that the Soul may receive the Divine Illuminations in pure Faith as to her intellect, she is not to stick to the particularities of it, nor to the differences that possibly may be in them; but to look on and cleave to God alone, who is hid under them, and the Author of them; and be always ready to quit all particular Intellections that God communicates to the Soul, to receive from him new ones, which yet we are no more to cleave to than the former. God alone is to be adher'd to, who is the incomprehensible Author of all his particular Operations.

Thus have I shewn what God requires of the Intellect in matter of Faith, *viz.* a fund of Mind wherein neither Reason nor Imagination do at all act, but where God only may be and act brightly as he pleases, the Soul mean while not adhering to the particular manners of God's acting, but meerly because it is God acting, and God infinite and incomprehensible who can dispose of his infinite ways above our Understanding.

And so the object of a Soul that would exert an act of Intellectual Faith, is God alone, incomprehensible and enlightening as he will a Soul that gives him full Liberty to dispose of its Intellect at Pleasure, to vary, suppress, exceed and swallow it up as he may and he shall think fit.

When the Soul offers such a fund to such an Object its Understanding exercises an act of Faith, in whatever manner the infinite Object may act in it.

XXXVII.

First Illumination of the Faithful Soul.
How to receive by Faith the particular Lights of God.

XXXVII. When God is pleas'd to begin to establish in the purity of intellectual Faith a Soul that is dispos'd for it, he commonly does it by communicating to it particular and determinate Lights about Divine Things, as, concerning the Properties of his Divine Nature, of his Attributes, or of such and such Mysteries, of certain Truths, of our Redemption, and the like, which he dispenses diversly, and so far as he pleases.

The Soul may indeed receive and consider these Lights, but must not confine herself to the forms and particularities of them, she ought not to stick to them

as

as if they were exactly and truly the reality of the Thing as it is in God: On the contrary, she ought to raise herself up to the infinity of an incomprehensible God: And this for divers Reasons.

Chap.
IV.

First, If the Soul confin'd herself and rested in these particular Lights of God, 'twould be a sign she intended to shift and impose, and here make use of her Reason (a limited Faculty) instead of her Intellect, which being made for God, is in a manner infinite, so as to be able to exert infinite acts, that is, to raise itself up to the Contemplation of God, as incomprehensible, infinite and above all particular forms of conceiving him.

Reasons
and Ex-
ample of
this pro-
cedure.

In the Second Place, 'tis because these Divine Discoveries of Spiritual Things, how clear and distinct soever they may be, are but a very small matter in comparison of the reality of what they are in God, and of what we shall know of them in the next Life.

In the Third Place, because by this stiff adhesion one becomes incapable of being enlighten'd by God, either more fully or after any other manner. We know the extent and ways of Divine Illuminations are infinite; and that the Dispositions of the Soul being variable, 'tis necessary that God act upon it sometimes after one manner and sometimes after another. But to stop short and confine ones self to the First, or to any of the following Lights, is plainly against this way of God, and renders us incapable of his Gifts.

Lastly, Because those very particularities which God discovers contain in them infinite wonders, so that to comprehend or consider them aright, we must not stick at the limited forms under which they appear; but think, that the infinity of divine and incomprehensible Perfections that are in God, cast forth one or two of its Rays, in such and such a manner, and that even this little of them is what we comprehend but very imperfectly.

To give an Example of this; suppose God discovers to our Minds certain Truths concerning the Life and Death of *Christ*, relating to his own Divine Providence over Men, our Understanding must not

limit

Chap.
IV.

limit itself, and stop at what it comprehends of these matters, tho' by a divine Light, as if divine Faith consisted in receiving either these words or these forms; but receiving them, it must raise itself still infinitely above them; even to the infinite God and to the incomprehensibility of his Wisdom, Justice, Goodness, Truth and Power, which all meet there in Conjunction; and heartily and sincerely acknowledge, that in such or such of God's dealings, in such or such a mystery, in such or such action of *Jesus Christ's*, in its principle end, its effects and qualities, there is an unsearchable depth of divine Wisdom, Goodness, Justice, Truth and Power, beyond all that we do actually perceive of them; and that God may reveal more thereof to some, to others less, or sometimes more and sometimes less, sometimes nothing at all to the very same Person. So that to embrace the particular divine Lights, with true and pure Faith, regard must chiefly be had not to the particular forms, but to the infinite God that is annex'd to them, and comprehends in himself infinitely more than the particulars he discovers to us.

XXXVIII
Second
sort of
illumina-
tion. The
pure Con-
templati-
on in the
obscure
Light.

XXXVIII. For God's Will is, we should be his in a manner worthy of him, that is in an infinite manner; and 'tis to this he begins to draw and dispose the Soul, by this first sort of divine illumination I have been speaking of. But when he intends to ground and confirm it in this state, he illuminates it in such a manner as exalts it above itself and its own acts, and above all comprehensible Light. And here it is that we give God the glory of being incomprehensible and infinite: For he then shines into the Soul, in a manner that being to the Soul the most certain and indubitable Light of all, is yet insensible to it and inconceivable. And this is what is properly call'd the pure Contemplation: It is term'd likewise, the obscure Contemplation, the dark Light or the light Darkness: And all this not only without Contradiction, but with a depth of infinite Truth and Solidity. A Soul that is arriv'd to this pitch may say with *Solomon*, *The Lord said, that he would dwell in the thick Darkness. I have prepar'd thee a place to dwell in, and an House to abide in for ever.* In the bottom of this Soul as in the most Holy Place, there

there is nothing particularly discern'd, because all is dark there; but yet upon occasions 'tis thence that particular Oracles and Lights proceed, even to Reason and Sense, as far as such particulars shall be necessary.

Chap.
IV.

XXXIX. I say God does thence give forth particular Lights, so many and so far as they are needful: Which ought to be observ'd. For it often happens, that altho' a Soul truly yielded up to God thinks it has need of such and such particular Lights, to know what is God's Will in this or that, and how it ought to carry itself in several important Occurrences of Life, yet it receives none; tho' in such circumstances as oblige it instantly to resolve one way or other and proceed to action, which it would fain do according to the Will of God, which it prays to be instructed in, but cannot obtain it. And the Reason is, because God Judges it not at that time necessary for the Salvation or Perfection of such a Soul, that it should be particularly enlighten'd in that case; and because he designs to mortify and purify it still more and more, and keep it from making Idols even of Things Divine, and setting them up to its own self-love and satisfaction: Now to walk always in company with God and his divine Light, would be no great occasion of Mortification, of a disinterested and pure Resignation: But it is a very great one to see ones self necessitated to walk without him, thinking all the while we are forsaken of a Light and Direction which we love, which we desire, which we seek but can no where find. We commit our selves wholly to God, and would know whether such or such a Thing, which must be done or omitted immediately, be his Will or no, but know it cannot. What an unspeakable trouble is this?

XXXIX.
Why God does not always give the Soul the particular Lights it desires, and thinks it needs to behave itself as is ought.

Yet in it we learn this high Resignation, to yield our selves up to God's Will, tho' it should be his Will that we should be in Darkness; and to strip our selves of all self-seeking even in Things the most Divine.

In this case and for these ends, particular Lights are not only not necessary, but would indeed be an hindrance to them; and therefore God does not give them, but leaves the Soul in the obscure Darkness of the

Chap.
IV.

the Faith of pure and absolute Resignation: And this state is so far from being prejudicial to the Soul, that it is the most advantageous it can be in, tho' it then thinks itself forsaken of God, and doubts whether in those its particular actions it does the Will of God or not. Yet is it nevertheless most perfectly guided by God tho' it see him not, and does his Divine Will, tho' it have no sensible assurances of it. God walks by her side and leads her tho' she perceive it not; and 'tis then she may be said to be in the *obscure Light*, and in the *light Obscurity*; for being in absolute Resignation to God, she is in the divine element, but having no particular perception of her ways, this Light is to her a Darknels.

XL. O-
ther sorts
of Divine
illustra-
tions that
are con-
sequences
of the
former.

XL. When the Soul is sufficiently grounded in the Faith of an infinite and incomprehensible God by this transcendent illumination we have been speaking of, and when God designs to put her to the Trial, or to give her a taste of some of the fruits of her interior, or some fore-tastes of eternal Life, or lastly, to employ her in the promoting the Salvation of Others, he then communicates to her again particular Lights, Touches, Rays and Sentiments, infinitely diversify'd, and to all these the Soul squares and yields herself as a ready Instrument, acknowledging therein the Will of her infinite God, and abandons her self to all the varieties of his conduct indeterminately, without any fixing upon particulars. All is alike to her, so it be but of God, or God be hidden therein; for 'tis he alone she adheres to and means to follow in and above all particular Appearances and Sentiments whatever.

Of the true *implicite Faith*.

XLI.
Difficul-
ties,
whether
these look
not like

XLI. Some possibly will say, what I have been laying down is very near a-kin to a certain *implicite Faith*, which has been strangely run down by a great many People. My answer is, that a great many People do

Implicite Faith, Only *Implicite Faith*, the true *Faith*.

greatly

Chap.
IV.Oecono-
my of sin,
ch. x.
7, 8, 9,

greatly decry what they have no great knowledge of; and besides, that this is not that *implicite Faith* by some so much spoken against. The *implicite Faith* to be dislik'd, is a credulity of human Reason, or of a dead and historical Faith, to which ignorant People give themselves up blindly upon the word of others whom they confidently rely on, though what they propose to them be commonly nothing but Absurdities or Trifles, or at best but external things and of little importance, which yet they recommend to them as if they were the very Quintessence of Divine Grace, and the most necessary means of Eternal Life. The Disposition of Mind blindly to fall in with all that these Men shall think fit to recommend as the way to Heaven is that ill *implicite Faith* we ought to beware of. 'Twas this made the very Angels to fall, as has been in another Place observed. But there is nothing of this in the Faith before us, though in effect it may be call'd *implicite Faith*. And since the absolute surrender of our Understanding here recommended is only to God in whatever he shall be pleas'd to propose to us, without examining it, or so much as comprehending it, this is not only a good and right Disposition of Soul, but I maintain, that in this Life there can be no purer Faith, and that it is the only true Faith; it being this alone that gives itself up to God without reserve, receives him after a manner worthy of him, above all particular and bounded Conception, Light and Sentiment; and practically owns this fundamental Truth, that God is infinite and incomprehensible; that he is a Light, a Good, a Wisdom, a Power, a Justice; in a word, a Being above all Comprehension and Thought. Yes, this Divine *implicite Faith* that seeks to rest in God above all that the Mind perceives, is the true Faith, that enlightens, that purifies, that justifies, that makes persevere, and that saves through a total Resignation to its adoreable Darkness. 'Tis an Abyss of peace, charity, humility, of teachableness and holy indifference, where there is neither fear nor dispute, neither errors nor disquiet; and there 'tis the Soul possesses in substance, though under a Vail, the eternal Goods, which shall after this Life be possess'd with open face and unvail'd.

XLII.
*Faults
 Men have
 fallen
 into thro'
 their not
 under-
 standing
 of these
 truths.*

*Perpetu-
 al mistake
 of the
 disputers
 about
 matters
 of Faith.*

XLII. The ignorance of these Truths touching Faith as it regards the intellect, has been the cause of an infinite Number of oversights in a great many of those that have pretended to dispute of matters of Faith; to teach, defend, maintain, to promote and propagate Faith. Upon which it is but just we should make two or three Remarks by way of Application, the better to evince the importance of the fore-mention'd Truths.

From what has been said it appears in the first place, how far removed from the Truth and Knowledge of the true Faith the Disputers of the World are, that insist only on the Ideas framed differently by their Reason about matters of Faith, and are very eager and warm in pressing them, as if the true Faith, or something essential to it were therein concerned. And grant it be so, that they take their Notions from the words of Scripture and Revelation, as may be true of some of them; but must they therefore be said to be of Faith, or to be Faith itself? assuredly all this may be met with in a dead Faith and in that of Devils, which for certain is no true and saving Faith. A thing to be essential to a lively Faith, must belong to the Ground of a Soul that resigns up to God its desires, intellect and acquiescence after an indeterminate manner and beyond all particularity. All particularities, whether inward or outward, in the desire, in the understanding, in the affections and will, in words and ceremonies, are only means to Faith, or it may be, hindrances to it and Idols. They are means of it when they serve to the Introduction or Promotion of the divine Disposition of Soul we have describ'd, but when they are hindrances to it, they are so to true Faith, and are meer Idols: And should be call'd direct Heresies, if we would give things their right Names. I shall say presently and in brief wherein Heresy consists.

XLIII.
*Reflexi-
 ons on
 the ad-
 vance-*

ment and propagation of Faith.

XLIII. We have seen above the true and lively Faith, while 'twas yet but beginning and weak, stood usually in need of support and several Appen-
 dages, which could not be withdrawn from it in those

that

that are weak, without stopping the course of their Faith, and by degrees totally extinguishing it, so that Faith in its beginning is in a manner necessarily obliged to particular desires, to the Knowledge and Ideas of divers things, and to particular Motions and Sentiments of acquiescence and sweetness; but that when it is to grow strong, pure and reigning, it ought to loosen itself from these, and in general, from all particularity till it arrive at the State, not to will, to desire, know, feel any thing, but according to the will and pleasure of God, without determining any thing of itself; being fully assur'd, that the manner of God's acting becoming himself, is above our desire, our choice, our knowledge, and all the Sensations we can possibly be capable of in this Life. Upon this Supposition, we see,

Chap.
IV.



XLIV. That whoever designs to convert another to the true Faith, or to improve him in it, if he make use of the particular means of the Word and Sacraments, awaking in the Mind of his Disciple particular Knowledges and Practices concerning Divine matters, thereby to carry him on to the State of universal and indeterminate Resignation of all his heart, all his desire, all his understanding to God infinite and incomprehensible; such a one is a true Guide of Souls, and a true Propagator of the Faith.

XLIV.
Who are the true Propagators of Faith.

XLV. But if any one go about to advance the Faith by filling the Heads of his hearers with the Knowledge, and that true, of all the Particulars contained in Scripture, and by the Practise of all the Ceremonies instituted by God, and yet after all suffer'd them to stop here, as if these were the main things wherein the Possession and Practise of true Faith consisted, and as it by the Theory and Perswasion of the one and the Practise of the other, Men were pleasing to God and in a state of Salvation; and were in these to Trust and in these to Glory, and to condemn all that had not these advantages; such a Teacher would be one of the most dangerous Deceivers of Souls imaginable; would lead them to Hell instead of saving them; would be a corrupter of the Faith instead of promoting it. The Reason of this we shall see by and by.

XLV.
Preachers of the Letter Enemies to Faith.

XLVI.

VI.
Those
that en-
join their
own fan-
cies to be
received
and ad-
hered to
by Men,
enemies
to the
Faith.

2 Theff.
2. 4.

XLVII.
Who so-
ever
makes use
of any
thoughts
or cere-
monies
whatever
to yield
up to God
his desire,
his heart
and mind,
promotes
true
Faith.

XLVI. How then would he be deceived who should pretend to advance the Faith by tying Mens Minds to false Notions and to human Practices in Divine matters? Should make them believe, embrace, defend, spread them, value themselves upon them, Glory and Trust in them as if by them they were made pleasing to God, and worthy of Salvation: This would be down right Idolatry: To set up in the Soul false Notions and Images, and make it cleave to them as to God, as to things on which Salvation and Eternal Life depend! This sort of Idolatry is more hurtful, and of harder cure, than the gross and outward. I say nothing of such, as may have prescrib'd things whether good or ill, and oblig'd Men to receive them to have the diabolical Satisfaction of seeing the Souls of Men paying them that submission as is due only to God. Such procedure would be so far from having any tendency to establish Divine Faith, that it would become none, but *the Man of sin, that sits in the Temple of God, and would be ador'd as God.*

XLVII. But on the contrary, if any one raise in the Minds of his Disciples as well as in his own particular Knowledge and Conceptions touching Divine matters, and set them upon practising such Ceremonies as he in his Heart believed Divine or Pleasing to God, though they were indeed invented of Men, and the Knowledge and particular Notions he communicated to them were in themselves false, if notwithstanding they did not cleave to nor rest in them as the principal Matters, but only us'd them as means to bring their Soul into such a Frame as to desire God above all, and to give up their understanding, their heart and the Government of them to him to do with them and in them as he pleas'd beyond our Reason; I say and assure, that such Persons would have the saving first Fruits of true Faith, and would be in the way and in the state of Salvation, though Heathen, Turks or Jews, or what else you please to call them. And therefore, we should not lightly condemn by wholesale all these People, nor their Notions, nor Practices so far as they may by or with them be excited to resign their desire, their understanding and their heart to God infinite and incomprehensible, the Creator of all things. 'Tis a false and horrible delusion,

lusion, and the fruitful Seed of infinite damnable Sophisms to imagine, that the particular Ideas, true or false, of things divine, make or constitute Faith. They are at best but means alterable, present, absent, varied, requir'd, not requir'd according to Times and Persons, and a number of particular and variable Circumstances: And Means so little saving of themselves, that (as has been said already, nor can it be laid too often) they may be found among the very Devils; and become Idols when rested in and trusted to. The Notion is taken for the reality; the means for the end; the Jewish and literal Worship for the Worship of the Spirit and of the Truth, in short, the Shadow of Death for a lively and saving Faith. The fundamental Reason of all this is as follows.

XLVIII. 'Tis certain we cannot properly make our own Salvation; but that 'tis God only that can do it, by producing in us as in himself, his divine desire, light and joy. All we can do towards it, is to leave God to work in us, not to hinder him by our own activity, by particular desires of our own and of our own chusing, by our beggarly Notions and our adhesion to them, by our assiduous and obstinate Labours to encrease them, to set them out, to defend them, to maintain them stiffly and resolutely, to take them for light, and to reject as folly any other operation but our own, and any other Light but that we have. 'Tis impossible for God to meet with greater obstacles in a Soul than these are to his Operations, or more destructive to the Soul, especially when it takes her Ideas to be Divine: For then she is incapable of parting with them. All the grossest Vices in the World, Robbery, Whoredom, Adultery, are nothing almost in God's Eye and to his divine Operation in comparison of Men's continually busying themselves to fill their Head and Heart with Notions, though Divine, if doted on, and their constant Employment.

XLVIII.
Ground
of these
Truths.
Since
God a-
lone is
the Au-
thor of
Salvati-
on, every
thing but
the dis-
position
of Soul
to let
God ope-
rate in
it, is a
hin-
drance
to it.

And so our Saviour declares in the Gospel, that Publicans and Harlots are much nearer the Kingdom of Heaven than the learned Pharisees and Doctors of the Law, who having their Heads filled with the Ideas of Gods Law and Ordinances were so far from ceasing from them and leaving God to Operate in them, that they

Mat. 23.
31.

Chap.
IV.



they were set so violently on them as to let the Devil enter into their Soul and push on their activity, and there produce and establish what they call *Divine Zeal*, which in all the Activists and Ideists, that are not indued with the true Faith of disengagement, is for the most part nothing but the true Operation of the Devil, fruitful in Murders and Lies against those that will not follow their course, the blind Zealot being then enraged, to see his Idols or Gods, which he would set up in the Souls of others, despis'd by them, either because they have others of their own, or it may be because they will keep their Heart as the most Holy Place in vacuity and obscurity: Whence it is, that false Zealots are more furious against them that are truly Spiritual than against others, by the Instigation of this false Zeal the Devil produces in them, and which is of all things the most contrary to the Operation of God and to Salvation.

Therefore all this must cease in us if we intend God should there work and there produce our Salvation.

Now Salvation not being properly and fully given till after this Life; nor given at all but by the pure and full Operation of God; 'tis plain that the chief business of our Life in this World, is while we are here to prepare ourselves for the pure and full Operations of God in our Souls in the next, and make ourselves fit and meet to receive them; for if we do not, if we be unfit, indispos'd, and contrary to them, we shall not be able to endure them; they would offend, hurt and torment us instead of making us happy.

XLIX.
How to
dispose
ourselves
here for
everlast-
ing Sal-
vation by
Faith.

XLIX. How is this disposition to be attain'd? By Faith, you'll say. That's true. But leaving words, let us stick to the thing: How may one here best dispose ones self for the pure, full, and infinite Operations of God after this Life?

First, Since it is God alone that can and must be the Author of these Operations wherein Salvation consists, it is necessary therefore so to dispose ourselves as to leave God to act, to leave him Master and Director of our desire, of our mind, and of ourselves wholly and entirely, not prescribing to him in the least, nor will-

ing

ing to act of ourselves and of our own fancy whether good or ill.

Chap.
IV.

Secondly, there is no question, but after Death, in eternal Life, the Operations of God in us, of his desire, his light and joys will be absolutely and infinitely different from all the Activities, Notions, Lights and Sensations, and from all other Particularities which we Experience in this Life; for who will not grant that there is as much difference between the most enlarg'd and brightest Perceptions in this Life and the least thing in Eternity, as there is between darkness and light, finite and infinite; whence it follows that the best way to fit ones self for the saving Operations of God in the other Life, is, to desist from our own activity, to pray that God would be pleas'd to operate in us and direct us, not to desire this or that, in such or such manner or measure; not to fix upon this Light, this Idea, Knowledge, or other, not willfully and obstinately to adhere to them; but to be ready to leave all, and let God shine in us as he pleases; not resting in our own Desires, own Thoughts, nor Sensations, but in God above all dispose he of us how he pleases.

L. It appears that this disposition is the immediate disposition for Eternal Life; that 'tis impossible there should be any other nearer; and indeed that 'tis impossible there should be any other; and that lastly all perishes that are not of this disposition.

L. How
the Souls
that de-
part with-
out this
dispositi-
on perish
eternally.

For if a Soul, when it departs this Life, and falls into the Element of God's pure and full Operation (exceedingly different from all we ever prov'd in this Life) if this Soul, I say, is habitually and resolutely full of its own Conduct and Activity; if it is accustomed to desire and to will to desire its own way; to be vex'd and passionately Zealous, and angry with all that complies not with its desires; if it is obstinately set upon its Notions, its own particular way of conceiving things, to take all that is contrary to it for Ignorance, for Falsity, for Errors or foolish Fancies; if it be us'd to place its rest and satisfaction in some certain Sensations; what will become of it when it shall find itself in a Life where the particular Desires, Notions and Sensations which it had in this Life, have no longer place nor use, and where it finds itself surrounded with a

Chap. Principle of Conduct, Desire, Light and Sensations
 IV. that infinitely differ from those of this present Life, and that proceed from another and not from ourselves! certainly such a Soul will flee from the Operation of God as Owls do from before the Sun, or as a weak before a victorious and powerful Enemy: And God's Operation will be to it Darkness, Torment and Hell. Here we see the Lot of the obstinate Learned, of Doctors full of their own Notions, Sciences and Opinions, of the pretended Propagators and Defenders of the Faith, of fundamental Articles and the truths of Salvation. He that has Ears to hear let him hear. *Ille dies veniet.*

LI. *How Souls departing in this disposition are saved without any hindrance.* LI. But such Souls as shall have accustom'd themselves to offer up the Government of themselves and their liberty to God, to desire nothing but his most holy will and himself above all particular Desires, Manners and Thoughts, who not resting in their Notions and Knowledge, which they had only us'd as a means to recollect themselves in God, and then present him with their Understanding, beseeching him therein to strike out, correct, to put or not to put what he pleases; lastly, such Souls as shall have been content even with their Vacuity, with an understanding in Darkness, and either to have no Sensations at all, or such things as are painful to Sense, how will they fair when they fall into the pure and full Operations of the Divinity? They will certainly be happy? God will do what he pleases with them, and his Operations will have in them their full and compleat effect. God will lead them where ever he pleases without opposition. The divine desires, such as it shall please his Divine Majesty to impress upon them, will find free admission in the ground of their Hearts: His ineffable and adorable Lights will invest their supple and pliant understanding, and inlighten it as God pleases; and whatever Sensations God raises in their Souls, will be their joy and Satisfaction: They having been even in this Life disposed in Heart, Mind and Desire, indeterminedly and beyond all Particularity and Propriety, to all that God should do with them and in them.

LII. O the Divine and Implicite Faith of Resignation. O rich and precious Treasure! Happy are they that possess so inestimable a Jewel, shut up and hidden, 'tis true as in a well-lock'd Cabinet, but yet 'tis what they have fast in their Hands, or rather in their Hearts.

LII.
Commen-
dation
and Ad-
vantages
of Impli-
cite
Faith.

Excellent Faith! the just Man's sight!
Of tow'ring Minds the happy Weight!
Presumption's Bridle! sweetest Rest!
Of works Divine, the Divinest!
Brighten my Mind and inward Sense,
And guard me by thy strong defence,
Against slight Learning, empty show,
Only from humble Hearts do flow
Sound Arguments for Truth, in vain
The proud the cause of Faith maintain.

Malay,
Sacred
Poems,

Thou art the true and infallible light of Souls! In thee they undoubtedly see all Truth necessary to be known.

An humbled understanding (they are the words of a Saint, far exceeding what I can of my self say of it) an humbled understanding sees, knows, tastes and feels this grand Secret, and quickly comes to the Divine union. God gives it a light Supernatural, with which it sees things much higher than it could before, much more certain and clear, without the least doubt, and yet without discerning them; not successively, but all in an instant. God manifests to it what he would have it know by a light altogether new, far above the understanding and its natural manner of acting; and it knows it so assuredly that 'tis impossible to make it believe otherwise; but he shews it no more than is needful for itself and others, and so far as is necessary to lead it still on to greater Perfection. This light is not sought by Man; but God gives it him according to his own Will; nor does Man so much as know how 'tis possible the thing of which he has so large a Knowledge given him, should be known: And should he endeavour to discover something more of it than is given him to know, 'twould be in vain, and he would be as incapable of it as a Stock or Stone. He that loses

St. Cath.
Sen. Vit.
C. 31.

Chap.

IV.

“ not his natural understanding can never have this
 “ Supernatural light, because when 'tis sought by the
 “ natural understanding, there is ever a mixture of our
 “ own Imperfection. God lets us seek as long as we
 “ are able, and at length brings us to know our Im-
 “ perfection, and when that is done, gives us this
 “ Supernatural light which casts our understanding to
 “ the ground, and thus dejected, it seeks no longer in
 “ itself, but crys out to God, *Thou art my understand-*
 “ *ing, nor will I know any more than 'tis thy Pleasure I*
 “ *should know; nor give my self any further trouble in*
 “ *seeking knowledge, but will rest content and quiet with*
 “ *thy Wisdom which encompasses and possesses my Spirit.*
 “ This light being Supernatural cannot be discerned by
 “ Man: So neither does it so affect him as to be com-
 “ prehended by him; but resides in his Soul after so
 “ spritely and sweet a manner that he thinks himself
 “ among Angels, part of whose Glory consists in their
 “ intercourses with God through this Divine Wisdom.
 “ Whoever therefore intends to see God spiritually,
 “ must pluck out the Eyes of his own Self-Presumpti-
 “ on; for Pride blinds many who will be knowing too
 “ much by their own understanding: An understand-
 “ ing once humbled, is soon enlightned, but one
 “ proud and foolish never attains to union Divine.

LIII.

Nothing
 can harm
 a Soul
 abando-
 ned to
Implicite
Faith.

LIII. O how great are the Advantages of an humble
 Soul resign'd to Divine *Implicite Faith*! This is the
 saving Faith; 'tis the immediate and only disposition
 to the Gift of Salvation; and thus God gives Salvati-
 on through Faith. This Faith is infallible and incor-
 ruptible; for Error arising only from the activity
 of human Reason, and there being none but God that
 can operate in an understanding loosen'd from self and
 every thing else, and rais'd up into God, 'tis evident
 there can be no error in its Faith. This is the purify-
 ing Faith, it takes out of the Soul all its Filth and
 Pollution, all its Conceits, and whatever is not God,
 because it cleanses it of every desire and every light
 that is not God: 'Tis true a Soul thus dispos'd some-
 times has, and indeed ought to have upon occasion,
 particular desires concerning the things of this Life and
 its Body; it must now and then have Thoughts and
 Perceptions conformable to those of the Oeconomy of
 this

this World: And even sometimes it may through infirmity or dispensation contains certain peculiar Opinions and those Erroneous, about divine Matters; but all this hinders not the Purification of the Soul, nor does it defile it, because they are not seated in it, much less in its Fund, which is the Throne of God and of Purity; but appear transiently only in its Reason and Senses, or in its outward Courts that are given up to be trodden for a time by these gross and brutish things of this World, where it must of necessity remain till the Day of Redemption.

Chap.
IV.

LIV. Properly speaking 'tis only the Abyſs of the Soul, its Mind, and Heart that God is jealous of. 'Tis here he will see no Images or Idols nor any thing else set up that is not himself. Particular Ideas, Images, Sensations and Desires may in time and place be presented to reason, to the Imagination, to the Affections and Senses, and stay there too as long as is necessary. God suffers them there and does himself present or offer them in Persons that are wholly resigned up to him. The Soul may consider this or t'other Idea, have such or such an Opinion, will this or that, perceive this thing or t'other, but upon condition not to cleave to it from the bottom of the Heart; not to regard them, desire or use them but as means necessary, transitory, and perishing, and as little as may be, always keeping for the infinite God a fund pure, a desire inextinguishable and transcendent, an intellect and will aspiring after him alone, and that are truly ready to quit all for what he shall be pleas'd to give.

LIV.
How God suffers or cannot suffer particular things in the Soul.

LV. In this state, what hurt can my Opinions, for Example, and Notions do me, or another, though erroneous, supposing I held any such? If for instance, I was of Opinion that before any Sin was committed, God had no Idea of sin. and yet that indeed he had? that God was not by his Essence present to corporeal Beings, and that yet this were false? if I believ'd there were no duration nor Succession in Eternity, and yet in truth there was; if I thought Jesus Christ present as to his Body in the Eucharist, though it were not so, and a hundred such like things; what hurt I say, could these Error do me as to God, supposing they were such? God would know and see in the bottom

LV. *How erroneous Opinions do not hurt those that have implicite Faith.*

Chap.

IV.



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Implici e

Faith is

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tues. Two

Errors

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tolerate.

LVI.

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LVI.

of my Heart, that I am not in the least fond of 'em; that I make them not my main Business, but only an occasional exercise of my Reason, and the means sometimes to awaken such Thoughts as may assist me in the elevation of my Heart to him alone above these and all things else. He would see that I esteem this and all my other Knowledge very imperfect and defective; that I desire he may dispose of them as he pleases, take them away, change, encrease or diminish them; and lastly that I am perswaded, that the least reality of divine things infinitely surpasses the sorry Images my weak Reason draws of them sometimes as well as it can, being very ready to forsake these Shadows to adore the incomprehensible Light and Truth of God whenever he shall please to manifest it, and which I already adore unknown. Should I die in such a State, I say, and have a lively hope that all the false and erroneous Opinions that my Reason possibly may have about things Divine could not in any wise be prejudicial to me, for being not at all wedded to them but ready to quit them with joy at the approach of the light Divine, as soon as ever that did vouchsafe to shew itself, my Opinions would vanish; and the Divine Light meeting with no impediment in me would in an instant take possession of my Mind and Heart, and they reflect it upon my Reason; and that, not having been spoil'd by an obstinate adhesion to its own Conceits, would be presently purify'd by the light of Faith.

LVI. This Divine Faith being the true one is inseparable from all the Vertues. It is inseparable from the Love of God: For the desire and the Mind being resign'd to God, and turn'd away from every Thing else, are the Vessels of the Spirit of Love. It is inseparable from Charity to our Neighbour; for it desires and endeavours to bring him to the same Resignation to God. It is peaceable and free from all disputes: For Opinions and Notions (those immortal sources of dissensions) have no place in Faith: It looks on them as an outward Court to walk and divert itself in, and not as the Sanctuary, the Place of worship. If it be mov'd at them or make ado about them, 'tis when Men have too high an esteem of

Chap.
IV.

of them, and would make them pass for the principal and absolutely necessary Things when they would place them in the Sanctuary, make them be held or honour'd for God, and Sacrifice one another to them; or lastly, when they will suffer them to take up all their Thoughts without Doors, and in the Court, and never come into the Temple, nor give any time or room for the inward Operations of the Holy Ghost. That is to say, that excepting these two Capital Errors, the one, of setting up the acts of the Understanding and the Conceptions of Reason, concerning Things Divine in the Place of God; the other, of denying or rejecting the Inhabitation and immediate Operations of the Holy Ghost, and substituting in their room the Works of corrupt Nature, and yet disowning any such Corruption, Faith tolerates all other diversities.

Not but that it bears with these too: But 'tis where they are not willful and affected, and where the teachable Temper may leave some room to hope it will at length quit them and give glory to Faith. But for such as are otherwise dispos'd; them it receives not into the number of the true Disciples of Faith, but cuts them off too if ever they profess'd themselves such, but yet neither wishes nor does them any hurt: *For he that does Evil has not known God*, by the Light of true Faith.

LVII. I could wish Men would seriously reflect upon these Things. They would then easily see what prodigious deceits there are in what is commonly call'd *Conversion to the Faith, Orthodoxy, Heresy*, and the like. One thinks he is himself converted, or has converted Others, that has done nothing but fill'd them with Idols, Vanity, Pride, hardned them and made them worse, both himself and his pretended Converts, who at most have but chang'd their Idols. All Opinions and Notions, tho' never so true, about Things Spiritual, may be the very matter of Heresy, when they are adher'd to as the principal and end, with Obstinacy and Acquiescence; and on the contrary, Opinions and Speculations, however false, may be the Subject of Orthodoxy, and very well consist with it, when they are not stiffly adher'd to, but only employ'd in

LVII.
Conversion
to the
Faith,
Ortho-
doxy,
Heresy.

LVII.
Conversion
to the
Faith,
Ortho-
doxy,
Heresy.

Chap.
IV.

the Service of disposing the Soul to Faith of entire Resignation, which is the only true Orthodoxy where in there can be no Heresy nor capital Errors: These are no where to be found but in the Human Notions and Opinions, either when we would make them pass for Divine and Principal, as if they were Gods or Lights Divine, to which Faith itself must serve and obey: (An Heresy this invented by Human and Philosophical Wisdom, and which the Author of the *Search after Truth*, has of late most strenuously endeavour'd to re-establish on the Throne) or when we adhere to these Images and Operations of our Reason, and deny that it is the Holy Ghosts part to work immediately on our Souls, which is another *Pelagian* Heresy reviv'd again in our Days by certain blind Wretches that call themselves *Mediatists*, which directly overthows Faith, as well as the other, and is (as that) entirely opposite to the yielding up of our Soul and all its Powers to God, and to the Presence of God in our Souls, or to our Union with God.

LVIII.

All the Knowledge of Reason, but dung before the Light of Faith.

LVIII. And if this be true in relation to the Ideas of Divine and Heavenly Things, as well as to those of Creatures which are complicated with the means of our Redemption, what shall I say of the simple Ideas of Human Reason, which the Soul out of pure and vain curiosity, without any respect to Salvation, labours to excite and unfold in herself by the endeavours of her Desire and Meditation? I say and assure, First, that in the Divine Implicite Faith all natural Ideas and Perceptions, with all that belongs to them, seem and are but vile and loathsome dirt and dung; and this I say with a great Saint, who having been himself Learn'd, and considering after he had given himself up to Faith, not only his knowledge in natural Things, but that too which he had by his Study acquir'd in the Law of God, says, *what I once counted gain I now take to be loss*, and prejudicial, thro' the Faith of Jesus Christ. And indeed, all Things seem to me but loss in comparison of the sublime Knowledge of my Lord Jesus Christ, for whose sake I gladly lose all, and esteem all but Dung, that I may win Christ, and be found in him, (that my desire, my understanding, my heart

Phil. 3.
7.

heart may be in this infinite God, in his Light and in his divine and infinite Operations, and not in the paltry Ideas of Creatures, and the study and activity of my own Spirit) *not having mine own Righteousness* (a bright and righteous state) *attain'd by the Law*, (consisting in the Works of my own Spirit and in the endeavours I may have us'd to regulate my Life according to what seem'd best to a Soul not yet united to the Light of Grace) but a Righteousness (an Estate pleasing in God's Eyes) *which Springs from Faith in Christ Jesus*, and comes from God through Faith: And *that so I may know Jesus Christ and the infinite Power of his Resurrection*, and what it is to partake of his Sufferings by Conformity to his Death: And may strive to attain to the utmost of my Power the Resurrection from the Dead; (to the Life purely Divine, which we then enter, when we are dead to all that is different from God.) *Not as though I had already attain'd this, or were already Perfect*, but I am resolv'd to press forward to attain this great good, for which *Jesus Christ* has drawn and taken me. *Brethren*, I count not my self to have apprehended or to be already in perfect Possession of this infinite and incomprehensible Good; but I forsaking and forgetting what I have cast behind, and reaching forward after the Things that are before, I run towards the mark for the infinite Prize to which God hath called me in *Jesus Christ*.

Chap.
IV.

Let us therefore as many as be Perfect, be thus minded; and if in any Thing you be otherwise minded as to these particulars, you may assure your selves that God will reveal even that unto you. As to the rest, let us continue firm to the Things wherein we agree, to aim at the same mark and be of the same mind (as to this Score, and this infinite and incomprehensible Good,) and herein imitate me and all such as follow my Example.

I was willing to recite the whole Passage, tho' somewhat long, and translated as seem'd to me most agreeable to the original and design of the Apostle, because its very apposite to the matter in hand.

LIX. *They melt and vanish before it.* **LIX.** In the Second Place, I can positively say, that when it pleases God to reveal or manifest somewhat more particularly certain Truths, some one Divine ray more especially, some Ideas or Perceptions of Things, whether of Heaven, or of this World; when by a more special evident and distinct Light he excites in the Soul certain Perceptions; then do all the Ideas of Things Divine or Natural, form'd by the Intention of Thought and Reason, vanish and fly before the divine Thoughts like Darkness and Owls before the Sun. When God arises in a Soul, all his Enemies, all that was opposite to the Purity of his Divine Operations, are scatter'd and melted like Wax before the Fire. Then do those Idols fall down, which we took to be Divine, or the Substance of God himself and of his Eternal Word, as some have vainly imagin'd. Then it appears, that almost all the Notions and Ideas that we had form'd (even of Things natural and material) and which we held to be very clear and distinct, are very often nothing but empty and absurd imaginations, about which the Soul dances a Fairy Round to her own Musick, and fancies she does wonders, because in the midst of all her Darkness she ever hits the track, and knows, as I may say, the compass of her own wanderings.

'Tis impossible to tell how different the Divine Ideas are from those of the most accomplish'd Wits form'd by the Labour and Study of their own Reason, and indeed how contrary they are to them.

The Proud and Presuming Learn'd, that are sure and confident they have the Truth, would but scoff and deride such sorts of Truths and Lights, were they offer'd to them, so opposite are they to their pretended Fundamental Truths.

So neither does God communicate them to them; but to those only who are simple and humble, and do not so much as desire to have the particular Knowledge of these Things: For the true Ideas of Natural Things, as well as the Light of Faith, are given to such Souls only as are empty, and offer up to God their desire and their intellect indeterminately, to do with them as he pleases.

LX. Nothing in the World is a greater hindrance to the Light of Faith, as likewise to the particular Lights, which God gives concerning Things, whether Divine or Human, than the fullness of our Soul, and the Labour of our Studies and Meditations. We seek our selves too much, we consult our selves too much, we busie our selves too much with our Selves, with our Activity, with our Thoughts and Speculations, with our Reflections and Considerations; in a word, we take so much Pains to darken and damn ourselves, that 'tis a pity to see it. This is all a hindrance to God, so that he cannot shine nor work in our Hearts, nor assist us. He always finds us in our unhappy employ, always plunged in the mire of our own Notions and Images, not allowing him one Moment of Silence and Rest, that he alone may Act in us: And as soon as ever he vouchsafes to begin, the unlucky Activity of our Reason presently disturbs and spoils his Divine Work.

It were better to attend to God in simplicity and vacuity, that he might operate in the hidden center of the Soul resign'd and aspiring solely and indeterminate-ly after his unspeakable Grace and Light, that exceeds all that we can ask or think of our selves.

In silence and hope shall be your strength, says he to us by his Prophet, to recommend to us the Faith of waiting, and silence or vacuity, if we design he should assist us. *He does good to his Beloved in their Sleep, and teaches them in the Night Season and the quiet of their Faculties:* But there is, that neither Day nor Night giveth rest to his Eyes, and yet is not able to find out the true cause of what is done under the Sun: *He Labours hard to seek it out, yet shall he not find it, and tho' a Wise Man think to know it by the labour and activity of his Reason, yet shall he not be able to find it.* But, (to apply with the Mysticks, the Figurative Words of Scripture to the internal Things of Faith,) while all things were in deep silence, and the night in the midst of its course, thine Almighty word, (the luminous word of God) descended from his Throne, to slay in the Soul that resigns itself to God, all the works of Darknes, and the Fruits and first-born of the Party of Death

LX. Op-
positions
of Men
to the
lights of
God. Dis-
positions
to 'em.

Isa. 30.
15.

Psal.
127. 2.
Psal. 16.
7.
Ecclef. 8
17.

Chap. IV. Death and Sin, and by a Light and Conduct Divine, to bring it into the Land, and State of Everlasting Rest.

LXI. Tho' in Man the Light of Faith was extinguish'd yet there was a possibility of enkindling it again in him.

LXI. And thus does the light of Faith, the Son of God, the divine word resume his Seat in the ground of the Soul of Man; who was not absolutely incapable of receiving this adoreable Light again, in as much as he had not exprelly, knowingly, wilfully and obstinately rejected it. That which depriv'd him, and rendred him incapable of it, was his Application to something else, to his Reason, to his Notions, Sensations and Passions, and in a word to his own activity. When therefore he abandons all these to offer to God again his desire, and his understanding, he does again become capable of the Divine Light, and does then effectually receive it: but never before. I need not enlarge upon this Divine Illumination of the Soul by Faith in the midst of its night and darkness. The Mysticks, and they only, have sufficiently and excellently well handled it, and among the rest, particularly the Divine John of the Cross, whose works are, or should be well enough known.

LXII. Recapitulation of what Faith of the understanding is.

LXII. Faith then consider'd with respect to the intellect, is an offer and a confident yielding up to the infinite Light of the word of God, of our understanding, which we empty of all particular Ideas and Perceptions, being fully perswaded, that it will be filled with Divine Light, which shining in it obscurely and ineffably, is infinitely above all our particular intellects and perceptions; and certain, that if upon all necessary occasions we do in Vacuity and Silence look towards the obscurity of this Holy Place, there will flow from it towards us all the knowledge and particular Lights concerning all the things Divine and Human, which we may need to guide us through all Obstacles to a blessed Eternity.

Of Faith as it respects the Acquiescence. The Sum of it.

LXIII.

Of Faith. Of Acquiescence. The advantages of it.

LXIII. There remains now but little more to be said

concerning

concerning Faith as it regards the Acquiescence, tho' the Perfections that flow thence, or are contain'd therein, are infinite Abysses of Repose, of Peace, of Joy, of Glory: A return and reflux upon the desire, and upon the Lights of God, a continual awakening and renewing of the desires of the Father, and of the infinite Lights of the Son; and an effusion of Love of bright and joyous desires, which are indeed the Holy Ghost himself, living in the ground of the Heart, and of the Acquiescence of the Soul, moving and modifying it by his Substantial Presence, as he does the Father and the Son, the essential Desire and Light of the Deity; this is but dark and hidden during this Life in true Believers, whose Hearts are possess'd with a Peace, with a Joy, with a Repose that pass their understanding.

Chap.
IV.

LXIV. When the Souls Desire and Intellect are in the inward Dispositions aforementioned; the Acquiescence, without any other Preparations but these, becomes fill'd with its Object, the adoreable Spirit of God, the infinite Treasure of Love, Joy, and Peace; and therein acquiesces above all Sense of Acquiescence, Joy and Peace. 'Tis he that perfects and consummates Faith, that exalts it to its highest pitch, to its ruling, justifying, and pacifying State. And in this respect, Faith is a confident Remission of our Acquiescence to the Holy Ghost, in whom we rest above all Repose and Sense, trusting to him the Desire, the Intellect, and the Ground of the Soul, to awaken, govern and direct them as he will.

LXIV.

Condi-
tions, insu-
sion and
definiti-
on of
Faith, of
Acquies-
cence.

LXV. And as these three fundamental Faculties of our Souls, which are the Seat of Faith, viz. the Desire, Intellect and Acquiescence, are as I may say, under the Jurisdiction of that noble Gift of the Liberty; so Faith, which reaches to the Desire, to the Intellect and to the Acquiescence, must also be grounded and compleated in the Liberty; that is to say, the liberty must submit itself to Faith, or confidently remit itself to the Spirit of the liberty of God, to the Holy Ghost, leaving to him absolutely and irrevocably the disposal of our understanding, acquiescence and will, and of all the Powers Spiritual and Corporeal that are directly or indirectly under the command of our Liberty. This consum-

LXV.

Faith ex-
tends to
the liber-
ty. Faith
of full
and pure
Resigna-
tion.

Chap.
IV.

Mrs.
Bourignon's
Light of

LXVI.
Defin-
ition of
Faith,
particu-
larly of
Faith in
the Fa-
ther, in
the Son,
and in
the Holy
Ghost.

consummation and compleat Abridgement of all the Perfections of Faith, is called the leaving of ourselves entirely to God, 'tis the Kernal of all Graces, of all the Wonders of God, and all the Duties of Man. If any out of love to their own Salvation have a mind to be thoroughly instructed in this absolute Surrender to God, and to know the inexhaustible Treasures of wonders that are contained in it, they may see in the Margin where to be satisfy'd beyond all they could expect.

the World. Part III.

LXVI. After what I have said of Faith, it is easy to give in few Words the Definition or Description of it, as you shall think best to call it; and to tell what it is to believe in the Father, Son and Holy Ghost. Faith is a confident and true yielding up of our Desire, Mind, Heart and Liberty to God alone, which yielding of it up is inseparable from the internal Presence of God, who animates the Desire, enlightens the Mind, and gives Peace to the Heart, and Influences all the Motions of the Soul in such manner as seems best to his Divine Majesty.

I believe in the Father, is as much as to say, I renounce all my own, and all particular Desires, and resign all the Tendencies of my Desire to the infinite and essential Desire of God the Father, for him to join with me; and make me desire the Light of the Son and Peace of the Holy Ghost in a manner worthy of God.

I believe in the Son, signifies, I give up my mind void and empty to the Light of the Divine word, that he would free me from my Darkness, and enlighten me after a manner ineffable, and incomprehensible to my Reason and Senses, as he enlighten'd and guided his own Sacred Humanity, being fully assur'd, that from this Illumination, though general and implicate in me, he will cause to issue forth as many particular Beams, as much distinct and precise knowledge of Things Divine and Human, of Sacred Mysteries, of things of Right and of Fact, as he shall know to be necessary to my Salvation; and perswaded that in all
wherein

wherein he shall please to enlighten me, there will be infinitely more Goodness, Wisdom, Justice and Truth, than I could possibly comprehend.

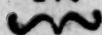
Chap.
IV.

I believe in the Holy Ghost, That is, I give up this Ground of my Heart that breaths after Rest and Satisfaction; I give it up I say to the Principle of Rest, of Peace and Satisfaction that is in God, to the Holy Ghost, that being united to me, he may produce in me that divine Contentment as pleases God; and that by his divine Reflexes and Motions in the desire and light of the Divinity, he may guide and direct towards God and in God all that is in me, even to the very Principle of my liberty.

LXVII. It is needless to point out every one of the infinite number of particular Truths that follow from these Principles as well with relation to Practice as Theory. For practice, here is the accomplishment of Gospel Self denial, the Death of our own Conduct, of the love and search after so many vain, curious, useless things that make us so miserably lose our time, and by the little Employments they give our little Spirits, hinder and stop the adorable Presence and Operation of God in our Souls, and yet without that all is but damage and loss. Though we should have otherwise all the most rare and desirable endowments in the World, an universal entrance into divine Mysteries, and also into nature and the works of God, were again become Lords of Nature, and could by the Power and intermediation of our Will, of our Desire, of our imagination, of our words and gestures, and by the command of elementary Bodies, of Plants, Stones, and of Metals do Wonders, discourse and dispose of all things and all sorts of Events, and even penetrate by an acquir'd cunning and subtilty into the dark Intrigues and designs of Man, and could tell how either to strike in with them, or else obviate them; what would all this profit us in comparison of the divine Faith of pure reliance upon God? All this would but distract us from God and from the only thing necessary: We should in all we did mingle our own Imperfections and Vices, darkness, curiosity, vainglory, self-satisfaction, love and esteem, and a thousand other Defects, which would give the Devil a fair opportunity to come in and make one at

LXVII.
*Practice,
Unity and
Division
of Faith.*

Chap.
IV.



the Game: we should make very ill choice of what is best for our own Salvation and God's Glory. For how do we among so many things and possible events know what is best for God's Glory, or for our own and others Salvation? Besides the devilish and malicious subtilty of wicked Men, the Power and Strength which they at present have as well as the Devil, over Nature, are incomparably greater and mightier than ours, which could ne'er be able to conquer and overcome theirs, much less should we by all our indeavours be able to re-establish things in that Primitive and Divine Order which they ought to be in.

Pfal. 37.
5.

Therefore the best course is, to do that by God, which we would have done by ourselves; to give up our Will, Mind, Desire, Imaginations, Designs, Conduct and all to God, and to beseech him to choose, to do and leave undone for us all that he knows most convenient, ways, means, ends, knowledge, ignorance, condition, health, sickness, Life, Death, and every thing. *Commit thy way unto the Lord, and put thy trust in him, and he will bring to pass all thy Business.* He will himself do all for those that entrust him, as I may say, with the Procuration, by depending intirely upon him; and he is powerful to do all, and to do all well, maugre all the opposition of Hell and wicked Men; and then, all will be done for us and our good, nor shall we expose ourselves to Pride, Distraction, Mistakes, Surprises of the Devil, and a thousand Perils we might fall into. We shall lose nothing by leaving God to work. The trouble will be his and the Benefit ours. And when the Devil and wicked Men shall be exterminated, and there shall be no more danger of sinning, then will *Jesus Christ* restore to us with infinite Advantage the trust of ourselves and of our Conduct which we had committed to him. *I know whom I have believed, and that he is able to keep that which I entrusted him with until that Day.* All that is solid in what they call Science, Prudence, Skill, Cabala, Practice, and the rest is contain'd in this. Happy is the Man that thus enters himself a Disciple in the School of this most pure and perfect Faith.

2 Tim. I.
12.

And

And hence you may take notice likewise, how faith has been always one and the same under all the different Dispensations of the Divine Oeconomy, under the Law of Nature, and of *Moses*, and of *Jesus Christ*, though the Particularities of *Revelations* and outward means have often varied.

Chap.
IV.

Lastly, Let it be observ'd, that true Faith having divers degrees and States, they may be all reduc'd to three General ones; the first is that of *desiring Faith*, that of beginners, that has a special relation to the Father; the second is *enlightning Faith*, that of Proficients, and relates particularly to the Son: The third degree is that of reigning Faith that gives Peace and rest to the Soul, which is that of the perfect, and of those in whom the Holy Ghost habitually resides.

LXVIII. Faith according to those three degrees produces three sorts of saving effects. Faith of desire produces *Conversion*: Faith of light Produces *Purification*: and Faith reigning and of Acquiescence, Justification. And from all three together comes *Regeneration*, or the Life truly Christian, which is a thing much rarer than is commonly imagin'd, I shall not speak of the first of these effects, having but * lately discours'd what is most fundamental and considerable therein; but the Second and Third containing matters of mighty importance, it may not be amiss to treat of them somewhat more at large, which is what I design in the Chapters following.

LXVIII.
Principal
effects of
Faith.

* Above
Chap. II.

CHAP. V.

Of the Purification of the Soul.

- I.  Refer'd Purification to Faith of Light, I. Di- or divine Illumination. This is to be understood of the Passive, but without excluding the Active, which usually goes before it; and therefore I shall say something of that too, that you may here have a fuller view of all that concerns the matter of Purification.

I. Di-
stinction
of Puri-
fication
into a-
ctive and
passive.

K 2

II.

II. *Observations concerning Man's corruption.*

* *Oeconomy before the Incarnation,*
c. 8. n.

2, 3, 4, 5.

III. *Active Purification, its necessity and most visible effects*

II. First of all, we must remember what was said before of the greatness of Mans darkness, that all kinds of evils are in him; and that they are habitual and tend to endure for ever, and to strengthen and reproduce themselves in him infinitely; that they have perverted the Faculties by strong and lively Habits, which continually grow, and that this corruption is universally in all that is in Man; there being nothing in his Faculties Divine or Inferiour that is not tainted with it, directly or indirectly.

III. The active and preparatory Purification is performed thus. Mans desire, and whatever is under his Government, the Faculties Spiritual and Inferiour, Reason, the Passions, the natural Senses of sight, of taste, and the rest, must excepting only what is absolutely necessary for them, be turned away from all other objects and sensations of the Creature, and forsake them. This preparatory Purification, to cease our distractions and to cease to do evil, is indispensably necessary, before God can set about the purifying our Souls; for without this God could purify nothing; for as fast as he cleans'd, Man would pollute. Which would be to build *Babel*, do and undo. Now God will be no *Babel* builder.

But if the Faculties and Senses incline towards their old Propensions and Habits, the desire must put forth all its strength and use its utmost Industry to take them off, and bend them to the contrary, to their Death, towards God, and towards his Holy Will. And in this are many things comprehended which we pass over.

In this active Purification God assists Man, and concurs with him, but not as yet purely and fully; because Man has not as yet fully the condition above noted, and particularly, that of casting himself wholly upon God; and so he does not feel so purely nor fully the help of God, yet with his labour and endeavours, which God assists in, proportion to their fulness, he comes so far as to hinder the outward Production of evil, and tho' the inward Root be yet living, and would fain be putting forth, is nevertheless kept from its purpose; and all this while the inward Motions and Sense of the ill Habits that are yet living do heartily trouble him, and he earnestly

nestly desires to be freed from them, and to that end Chap. V.
uses his best Endeavours.

IV. When by the Activity and Endeavours of the desire a Man is come so far as to suppress all the outward Fruits of the living Root of Sin that dwells in him; when he restrains his Faculties and Senses from launching out beyond what is necessary, making them leave all besides; such a one has made the first step in the way of Active Purification; and this is well, and what is absolutely necessary. But if he stop here, and rest satisfy'd in his having cut off the outward effects and fruits of Sin, or more truly struck them inwards, without thinking of plucking up the Root of it, this ought to be stil'd a Pharisaical Purification, the worthlessness of which should be very well known by every Body.

IV. To rest in the outward active Purification, is but Pharisaical Vertue.

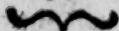
V. But when Man is not content with only curbing and repelling, or striking inwards to the Heart what would otherwise break out, but would proceed further, and by his Industry and Strength destroy the Man of sin lodg'd within, pull up the Root of evil, change and wipe out all his evil Habits, his most inward Propensions and Inclinations, then he undertakes a mighty work and knows not as yet the difficulty of it.

V. Endeavours of the Soul after inward Purification

This is a Task not only above Man's Strength, but his Activity also, which being corrupt, weak and narrow, cannot keep pace and act in concert with God's Grace, who must himself do this great work. The Soul, for want of more Light, doth not as yet know so much, and therefore pretends to use her own Activity here, yet still with God's Grace, which God does indeed give effectually to this Soul, and lets her by his assistance make some little conquests, till coming at last to put forth all her Strength, she finds her weak side, and where her Power ends, and by how much her Evils are too mighty for her, and what need she has of the Supernatural and pure help of her Deliverer.

God then gives her his Grace to attack sin within, which she does not without some divine Pleasure and pretty good Success. Man sees, that he overcomes, to his thinking, now one and now another of his ill Habits, of his vicious Inclinations, of his inward Bents

Chap.
V.



VI. That
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sorts of
Passive
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and Propensities to sin. But let him beware of being puffed up with his Success, and crying out, Victory too soon.

He ought from this to take occasion to praise God: to give him thanks for his help, to be more and more faithful to him, and to resign up himself more and more to his divine Grace, that by the Assistance thereof he may still go on conquering and to conquer. If he thus continue faithful, and the Soul resign herself to God, it then becomes meet to be invested with enlightening Grace; whose first effect is passive Purification, wherein the Soul acts no more, governs herself no more, strains and toils no longer, but is mov'd, determin'd, and acted by God, and the divine Light of Faith purifies her, her and all that is within her.

VI. There are several sorts, or rather several Methods and ways of the passive Purification. I know not whether 'twould be of any use to reckon them up, and to enquire the Reasons of their Differences, but only to keep Men from condemning God's various ways, which they would do if they thought there was only one. In the passive Purification, 'tis the Light of God that is the Principal Agent; 'tis that that is, as 'twere both Crucible and Melting Fire. But if it be remember'd that in God the Light is never separate from the divine Desire, nor from its Forms, which have in another place been spoken of; nor from the divine Acquiescence; and that in the Soul there is likewise the desire with its Forms of seeking, disquiet, painful, anguish and burning, as also the Faculties of Understanding, Love, and Acquiescence; it will not be hard to comprehend how the divine Light, which is God himself, designing to act purely in the Soul to purify it, may so do it as to make his divine Act, or the Brightness of it, imperceptible, while at the same time it more awakens the Forms of the divine Desire that are inseparable from it, or it may be that of the Acquiescence. It may also so act there as to make its own form of Light most sensible to the Soul. The same Light may likewise act directly and the most sensibly upon the Soul's Desire and its Forms, or upon the Intellect and the Love, or upon the fund of the Acquiescence. And thus we may reduce the ways and manners of the passive Purification to three general ones.

The

The first is, when the Light Divine Acting upon the Soul, so does it as to hide its Operations under the Forms of the Divine Desire (which is inseparable from the Light) and to act most directly and most sensibly upon the four first Forms of the Soul. I say the most sensibly ; for indeed it acts upon all that is in the Soul ; but not so as to make itself felt or perceiv'd equally. This is the most usual sort of Purification, and most of the Mysticks mention only this.

Chap.
V.

A second sort of Purification is, when the loving Light of God asks and manifests most directly and sensibly its own bright and lovely Form in the intellect and Heart of Man. This way is more rare and extraordinary. Of it there is a lively Example to be seen in the Divine Life of that admirable *St. Katherine of Genoa*.

The Third of these ways is, when the Light Divine rendring its self imperceptible, as well as all divine Desires, Motions and Sensations, leaves or works only, a tacite acquiescence in the fund of the Soul, which all the while is as it were lost, without sight or sense of itself or God, void of all manner of Light whatever. This is the most unusual way of all, as well as the most frightful, it comes near the state wherein *Jesus Christ* was upon the Cross, when not knowing, as I may say, which way to turn himself to find God, cry'd out with the deepest, but most imperceptible Acquiescence that God had forsaken him ; a state, this doubtlessly, the most dreadful the Son of God was ever in ; and consequently the hardest a Creature can be reduc'd to.

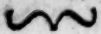
I shall hereafter speak only of the first and most ordinary of these ways, wherein nevertheless there appear sometimes at intervals Strokes of the Second and Third ; for the divine Operations coming but from one only God, in whom they are united, 'tis no wonder they should sometimes by God be as I may say complicated one with another.

VII. When the Soul has us'd her best Endeavours and Industry in rectifying and raising her Desire, and has faithfully pursued her course, and when she thinks she has conquer'd her Enemies, or wants not much of

VII. Be-
ginning,
Progress,
Manners
and Ob-

jects of passive Purification. In it no violence offer'd to the liberty,

Chap.
V.



it, then does God shed into her most inner ground the purifying Light of the most pure Faith, which piercing through her deepest and most secret darkness, gives her to understand that there is yet in her an infinity of Evils and Irregularities which she hitherto neither had nor could discover upon her most serious Attention, and exactest search and consideration of her Self imaginable. Then is this Soul amaz'd to find herself so quite another thing from what she thought, she seems to herself of pure to become foul, and to go backward instead of advancing. That if she goes about to try to cleanse herself from her spots, which seem to her now so Enormous and deep, she clearly perceives she does but lose her Labour, and that her own Activity, so corrupt in itself, reaches not so far; and that instead of curing the contagion of her deep, she only stirs it up and makes it break out upon occasions, whatever Resolution she in her Retirement may take up, to the contrary. And this making her happily despair of herself, of her own strength, of her own desires, and of all that is hers or ever can come from her, she throws herself at a venture into the Hands of God's Mercies and Righteousness, to do what he will with her. Then does God act more and more by his pure Light upon the Soul abandoned to his Divine Motions; and this Divine Light, which is Holiness and Purity itself, or more truly, God himself, moving divinely in the Soul as his Motions are Righteousness, Justice, and Order itself, it infallibly shocks, removes, overthrows, opposes all the irregular Habits and Inclinations, all the Bents and Impressions in this Soul that are contrary to its own divine and luminous Motions. These Obliquities it violently attacks and endeavours to give them a contrary Bent, and does not leave so much as the least Fibre or Atome in all the infinite capacities of the Soul, without forcibly turning and wresting them to give it a new ply, different from that it had receiv'd from corruption.

This force is not contrary to what I have said of Liberty and of God's manner of acting with free Creatures; for here the free Creature has wholly resign'd itself into God's Hands, with full consent that he do with it what seemeth him best, so that he does not
force

force her liberty, having before he thus acts obtain'd its consent of it. Besides, the manner of God's acting is not of itself violent; it is gentleness and sweetness itself; it is violent only in relation to the darkness and evil Inclinations of the Soul, that strongly and stiffly set themselves against it, and oppose its kindly Motions; but they not being the strongest, and the Light of God being Omnipotent in a resign'd Soul, the Divine Motions of Grace must certainly carry it against those of Corruption; and so the Light, tho' gentle of itself, must necessarily break, and with a kind of violence force all the inward Tendencies and Folds of the Soul that had been corrupted by Sin, and that so universally and perfectly, that they remain no longer what they are, but are become wholly Divine, and have no Inclinations nor Acts but of Light.

Chap.
V.



VIII. Nothing can to Sense be more quick and painful than is this Purification; nor can it be otherwise if we consider either the nature of the Soul, which is all Life and Sense, or that of its Understanding, or of its Will and Love. The Soul being of a most sensible Nature, 'tis impossible but she should, when all that is in her and in all her Faculties, an infinite number of repeated Acts, and of evil Propensions all contrary to the Motions and Impressions of the Divine Light are assaulted, invested, storm'd within and without, drawn and turn'd a quite contrary way by irresistible force, 'tis impossible, I say, but a Soul, all whose Faculties are infinitely sensible, as I may say, should then be in unspeakable Affliction and Desolation.

VIII. The Soul in this state is under a Sense of great desolation, and misery.

IX. The Light of God acting upon her Understanding, overturns all its natural and ordinary ways of acting (for corruption and darkness were mix'd with them) and so the Soul, astonish'd as 'twere by this divine stroke, loses all knowledge of herself: She no longer knows what she is nor what will become of her, being dazled by this divine Lightning, but especially her poor Reason is strangely ruffled: 'Tis there made a foolish and a brutish and ridiculous Beast before God. There it appears, that those that have made their Business to invigorate their Reason, to give it strength and compass, have acted no wiser a part than he, who being to be executed on a Scaffold, should strive to

IX. How the Soul finds herself incompass'd with darkness and Iniquities, and thinks herself more and more desolate.

Chap.
V.

live a Thousand Lives to feel the dreadful Torment^s of as many Deaths.

Pfal. 42.
8.

Then also the Divine Light laying open to the Soul all its Sins, not all at once, but successively, one deep of evils after another (to use *David's* words) she is scared to see nothing but Sins and Iniquities within and around her, that pierce her through, and with frightful Chains hold her fast bound in the Centre of the Deep; infinitely remote from the Light of the Sun; and which way soever she turns her Eyes, all is Darkness and Pollution; into which, to her seeming, she sinks still deeper and deeper. But it is not really so; she thinks so only because when she sin'd in her blindness, when she stray'd from the Fountain of Light and Life, when she made mighty Progress in the Kingdom of Darkness and Sin, still flying from God, she was insensible of it; the Devil carried her and kept her from trying, cast a Mist before her Eyes, so that she saw not her Darkness nor her Abominations, he made them appear to her like beautiful and sweet Flowers, and as if by her wandering from God she had taken her flight through fine and pleasant Gardens. But upon her first return to God, all the Devil's Charms vanish, and she finds herself in wild and frightful Desarts, in bottomless Pits of Darkness and Filth, all which she must beat over again and repass, to find her Source, and repass them too, not looking on them as formerly, under the deceitful Appearance of Delights and Beauty, but seeing them by a Ray of Divine Light in their own horrid Deformity, and feeling their hellish Stench, which before she had no Sense of. For this Reason it is that the Soul thinks she then first commits them, or then first enters into them. It is not so; but 'tis true that 'tis then only that she begins to see and be sensible of them.

X. How
the Soul
becomes
insup-
portable
and base
in her
own Eyes.

X. In the third Place, this Soul beginning now to love God with a Love of a most ardent desire and will, when the Light of God discovers to her the greatness of her Sins and the deepness of their Root, the Burden of them becomes intollerable, the displeasure and abhorrence extreamly great, for her having committed them against so infinitely amiable a God. The Soul hates and abominates herself upon that Account, especially

especially when the divine Light invests and awakens by its divine Motions all the Ideas of all the sins which the Soul has ever committed against God and its Neighbours. This is a desolation to her truly inconceivable, to have a lively sight of so many and so great sins, committed often with knowledge and deliberation, against a God so infinitely good, who standing in no need of so pitiful a Creature has nevertheless continually offer'd to it, even with Prayers and Intreaties, the infinite good, besides a thousand of other sorts of temporal Goods, which it has to that very day enjoy'd; whilst this unnatural Miscreant instead of answering so great love, has still gone on in a brutal and monstrous Ingratitude, has not serv'd and lov'd this great and wonderful God, has not sought his Glory, has not liv'd to so great a Majesty, that deserv'd infinite Worlds should be continually sacrificed to the least of his Wills: That instead of devoting herself to him blindly and generously, has entertain'd herself with Extravagancies and Fooleries, by seeking herself in a thousand sorts of Vanities, Toys and Dottages, things as empty as Dreams, which yet she has fottishly preferr'd before this great God, before all the cares and pains he took by his Incarnation to save her.

Furthermore, when this Soul sees she has not lov'd as she ought her Neighbours, who then seem to her Angels in comparison of herself, but often in such and such manner offended them, instead of edifying them has scandaliz'd them by a loose Life; has, it may be, been the occasion of their taking off their Thoughts from God, and plunging themselves deeper into vanity than they were before, and perhaps been the cause of their Fall and Sin, nay and eternal Damnation too; upon this sad review she is thrown into inconceivable Desolations on all Hands; she is not sensible of the Principles of Love which she has for God, nor of the Vertues of Faith, of Hope, or others, that may be, and in effect are in her; because these Vertues having hitherto been mixt with Imperfections, with Self-love, or regard to Self, and with other base Allloys, when they are surrounded by the pure Light of God, all is turn'd topsy-turvey, and nothing is seen
and

Chap.
V.

and perciev'd but imperfections, unbelief, wavering, and the rest. The Sense by which the Spiritual good is perciev'd is then itself in anguish; because it needs purifying from its Corruption. In this state, the Soul seeing herself overwhelm'd with Thousands of Mountains of Sins, feeling in herself no Faith, no Hope, no Charity, is in her own Eyes as vile and abject as the Devil himself, and in Truth she takes herself to be no better than the Devil. Only she knows that her Sins displease her (and that is then her only sensible Consolation) and that she would not for all the World Sin against God, in whose will she rests satisfied, tho' 'twere to be damn'd with the Damnation of Pain and the Privation of Joy (but not with that of Blaspheming, and murmuring and separation from the Divine Will) saying to God with *David*, *Lord thou art Righteous and thy Judgments are Just. Let me fall into the Hands of the Lord for his Mercies are infinite. If he say to me I have no Pleasure in thee, lo here I am, let him do with me as seemeth him good.*

Psa. 119.
v. 137.
2 Sam.
24. 14.

XI.
*Without
passing
through
these
States
and Dis-
positions
the Soul
could ne-
ver be
entirely
separated
from Sin,
or fly to
the Re-
deemer
from the
very bot-
tom of
the
Heart.*

XI. And this is the strait gate by which we enter into Life Eternal; and by which there are so very few that do enter. Yet is it the necessary way of Purification, without which 'tis impossible ever to see God. There is no other way but this to be absolutely loosned from all that is not God, from our selves, and from all that is within and without us. This cannot be done but by this Death to every Thing, by this afflicting fight and sense of the Evil, that is in every Thing that concerns us, and is most deeply rooted and interwoven in the very ground of our Souls. For when we see and feel with bitterness and horror, that there is nothing in our old *Adam* but what is corrupt, in his ground, in his faculties, in his acts, and in his Vertues, in his Heart, reason and members, in his exterior and in the very marrow of his Bones; that all that has proceeded from this old and past Life is good for nothing, is nothing but Corruption and Damnation; and we taste this with Life and Terror, we are thereby taught heartily and effectually to loosen our selves from it, and to look upon it all with abhorrence. We learn then to invoke the Deliverer in this kind of Hell, and by his Grace perfectly to disunite our selves from

all

all these Things even to the very least and most inward root: Thus is Purification finish'd, and is follow'd by Justification, and Regeneration; and at last by everlasting Salvation.

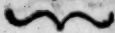
Chap.
V.

XII. But, some may say, where is in all this *Jesus Christ*, his merit, his blood, that cleanses from all Sin, his death, his righteousness imputed and to be imputed? A very pretty Question indeed, which plainly shews, how little *Jesus Christ* is understood. O Gracious Saviour, is it possible the Ignorance of Man should be so great, with reference to thee. as to ask where thou art, when we speak of the Purification of a heart, without expressly mentioning thy Name? It is too apparent that *Jesus Christ* is known only Historically, as one whose Story is in the Gospel, and not as living in the Heart. This internal Light that purifies, is *Jesus Christ* himself, *That dwells in the Heart*, by the desire and light of Faith: 'Tis *Jesus Christ* himself, 'tis the infinite price of his death and intercession, that have merited for the Soul this Purification and Strength through him to undergo it. 'Tis he, 'tis his merit, 'tis his righteousness and rectitude, 'tis the efficacy of his Death, that do then work and labour in the Soul, not by a Chimerical belief and imputation without conformity, but in a real and in-dwelling, and if you will an inherent manner; in as much as the Spirit of *Jesus Christ*, which then is, and worketh really, and inherently in Man, is inseparable from the merit, from the intercession, from the Death and Righteousness of *Jesus Christ*. The Soul to purify her self has no more to do but to sink down into the Death of the Son of God, into his Spirit of Death and Sufferings, of divine Merit and Vertue. She needs but to abandon her self to the will of the Father, that gives the Cup, and to the Son's that resigns himself to it, and to pray not to be discharg'd of it, and lay it on the Son as consider'd without her, but that the Son abiding in her interiour by the Light of Faith, that this divine Son meriting all, able to do all, suffering all, supporting all; acting all, would do, merit, support and produce in her, Vertue, Strength, Patience, Resignation and Death of Evil, in the same manner and with the same Power, the same Merit, and the same Vertue, that he did

XII. That
Jesus
Christ,
his Merit,
his Righteousness,
and all
that is in
him, are
really in
this Purification
Eph. 3.
17.

Chap.

V.



did it within himself when he sanctified and purified himself from the imperfections and curse of our corrupt Nature, which he took upon him in love to us, and to mark out to us in himself and in the Vertue of his Spirit, the way, the cause and the means of our true Purification.

XIII. To deny this Purification and reject it, is to deny Jesus Christ himself, and turn him into an empty Idol.

XIII. The Practice of this does not at all relish with the old *Adam*, it being Death to him: And the very Theory is what almost all are offended at. They are unwilling to suffer thus and to die, but would jollily throw this upon some outward *Jesus Christ*, who should not be the living God, the God of the Heart, the God that dwelling in the interior Works and Labours there by his Spirit as he did in his own Sacred Humanity. If this be not in Truth to deny *Jesus Christ*, his Divinity, Merit, Life and Death, and to make a dead and wooden Idol of them, set up without us, the Vertue whereof stands all in Fantastical Imputation and Notion, I confess my incapacity to distinguish the Truth of Things from Appearance and Falshood.

XIV. That is no wonder Men have at present so great aversion to those Truths, and why.

(a)
2 Tim. 4.
3, 4.

XIV. If amongst those that take upon them to be guides of Souls, there have been some that would not assent to these Truths, but were utterly against them, it was not to be wondred at. It was foretold that the (a) Teachers of the last Days would amuse the People with idle Tales, vain Speculations, and imaginary cleansings, and expiations, and that the People would greedily hear these Teachers, who scratch'd the Ears of their old *Adam*, and sooth'd them up in their Lusts. This is now but too truly fulfill'd: For most commonly as soon as a Soul begins to feel it go a little ill with her old *Adam*, receives some Light stroke with the rod, or it may be God designs to lead her by little and little to the healthful Death of Purification; immediately a whole tribe of Teachers come running in to dispel the wholesome troubles and sorrows of this same Soul, telling her they are but the Temptations of the Devil, that she must drive them away, and rejoice in that *Jesus Christ* has suffer'd all for her and by his Blood (not knowing that this Blood is the Suffering and Purifying Vertue of *Christ*) they are cleans'd from all their Sins, without any further need of their own Suffering to be cleans'd, instead of then

then bidding them have Patience, and preparing them to take part of *Christ's* Sufferings, and to cast themselves blindly into the Ocean of his Spirit of Death, of Merit, of Efficacy and Purification; to be thoroughly penetrated by it, and that this Spirit of the Son of God may act in them conformably to all his Qualities and Properties, to produce also in them in due time the incorruptible Fruit that Springs from and follows his real and inherent Operations, and not the sottish fancy of a foreign imputation, that should only cover the yet living Evils of the old Man; which would be the most destructive Engine of Souls the Devil ever invented.

Chap.
V.

XV. *This Doctrine the Key of the Book of Job and of part of the Psalter.*
* *This Book is*

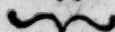
XV. Much might be said of this Passive Purification, which is the most substantial part of the work of our Salvation: But I shall forbear and refer you to the Writings of those that have treated of it from their own Experience. The Theory of it may be seen in the Treatise of the Works of the sublime *John* of the Cross, entitled, *the Dark Night of the Soul*; and the Practice in the little * Book of the thoroughly purified *Matthew Weyer*, as also in the Book and Example of *Job*,

not to be had in French but in Latin, with this Title, Theologiae Mysticae praxis viva, sive Weyeri effata & Epistolae, &c. And likewise in German, Dutch and English, under other Titles, but with the Name of the Author who writ no more.

and in the *Psalms* of *David*, which out of this Light are all Riddle, which nothing but this Doctrine can solve, somewhat after this manner. *Job* and *David* had already gone through the Active Purification, having by the help of God's Grace made it their Care and Business to purify and keep themselves from Sin, to keep God's Commandments, and to do what was pleasing in his sight, walking before him in his fear and in his love, and in that of their Neighbour; with an Operative Faith and a lively Hope, as the Descriptions they give of themselves, in divers places, do sufficiently testify. But God intending to cleanse the ground of their Hearts from all its Evil roots, and by the Passive Purification to refine their Vertues from all kinds of imperfections, his divine Light surrounds them, overturns

all

Chap.
V.



all on a sudden whatever belongs to them, in and without them. This is strangely surprizing to them, and this stroke of God, that is directed against the most inward Recesses of their Souls, wounds them so sensibly that they stand all amaz'd and affrighted at it: They complain they are pierc'd with the Arrows of God's Wrath, that they suck the Poison of them, that they feel their Bones dissolving, that they are going down to Hell, nay, that they are there already, that the Torments that they suffer are more and heavier than the Sand of the Sea, that they are Night and Day haunted with the Terrors of the Lord; and for ever undone. The divine Light penetrating and laying open before their Eyes the secret Disposition of their natural ground and the deep Beds of Original Sin, they are astonish'd to see themselves sunk in so many Evils, without knowing how or whence they came. They examine their Life and Actions: They find they have kept the Word of the most high; that they have walked in his fear and in uprightness, and yet they see themselves soak'd through and cover'd with Evils that are properly their own and belong to them. Wonderful and disconsolating surprize! They conclude, that after all their Righteousness, they are nothing: That if they justify and make themselves pure, God will so plunge them in the dirt that their very Garments shall abhor them; that 'tis to no purpose to make themselves clean; that they are of themselves nothing but filth and ordure, and that there is no bringing purity out of impurity itself. They see themselves encompass'd and overwhelm'd with Sins more in number than the Hairs of their Heads, they see themselves immers'd in the deep mire, and ready to be swallow'd up, without knowing how they fell into it, and content themselves with saying, (giving no Ear to the murmurings of Reason) *I have Sinn'd, O thou Saviour of Men: Heal my Soul for I have Sinned against thee.* They feel neither Faith, nor Hope, nor Charity: They complain that as to them God's Mercy is utterly at an end, that they are cut off from before his Eyes; that he will no more look on them nor hear them; that he has shut up his compassion from them, and wills they should Perish; that their Heart fails them,

Job 7.
20.
Psalm
41. 5.

them, is dry'd up and melted like Wax : They curse, (and with Reason, considering their natural ground and what is properly their own) they curse, I say, the hour of their Birth ; they wish they had never been, or had been Abortives, or Beasts, or Worms of the Earth, that so they might have avoided the afflicting sight of seeing in their inward ground, the Abridgment of all sorts of Evils and Dispositions contrary to the most sublime Purity of God, which to them is so disproportion'd. Their Ignorant Friends, that understand nothing in this conduct of God, come in upon them in this Juncture, who seeing them in this extremity of Affliction, are not able to comprehend the Reason of this Treatment, nor how it is that they thus justify and condemn themselves at the same time, stand upon their Innocence, and yet own themselves Sinners ; upon this they imagine they must needs have been guilty of some notorious Crimes, but secret, because they were observ'd to have liv'd Righteously : And hereupon these sorry Comforts fall a Preaching to them upon the common Topicks (tho' true) of Hypocrisy, of the Punishment of the Wicked, and of God's Justice ; they would fain persuade them they have liv'd but like Hypocrites, have not in good earnest endeavour'd to be upright, have neither cleans'd nor kept themselves from Sin to the best of their Power, and that therefore it is not without cause that God thus Punishes them. These are the Judgments that are passed on them by Men unknowing in these sublime ways of God, tho' well enough seen in other Matters : They are mistaken ; because they know nothing of this Passive Purification of the ground of the Heart of Man ; who after having done all he can to cut up in himself the Fruits and also the root of Sin, and to be upright and righteous, as in effect he is in his own Eyes, is nevertheless still Wicked in God's Sight, and must be yet thus further broken and shaken to be cleansed from the most inward strings and seeds of the Evils, which the Light of his active and former State could not discover to him, but are by the Light of God awaken'd, invested and violently shock'd 'till the most inward folds of the Soul are all struck out, and receive a contrary turn, perfectly Divine and pure. And then, as

Chap.

V.

well they themselves that are thus purify'd; as those that had judg'd so rashly of them, must be forc'd to own they were then both in the dark, and did not well understand God's methods, as Job and his Friends ought to have confess'd.

Similitude and other Considerations, in order to a further Explication of the Subject before us.

XVI.

The whole process of Purification explain'd by a Similitude very appropriate.

XVI. This being a matter of such weighty moment, and yet so little understood, I cannot but add one Word more concerning it by way of Similitude. Let us suppose then, that a beautiful Image, whether of Wax, or any other fusile and pure Matter, is utterly spoil'd and disfigur'd by a fall from some high Place into some nasty Jakes, and not only thoroughly stain'd and infected within, but so cover'd all over with Filth, that its form is chang'd into an hideous and monstrous Deformity, that was more like a Devil than any thing else. Here you see an imperfect Figure of the Corruption of our Souls. And now let us conceive, the restoring this Image to its Primitive Purity and Beauty to be the Business in Hand, and observe well the method of Doing it, because it fitly resembles the Purification of our Souls.

XVII.

(1) First resemblance. Active Purification.

XVII. First, This Image must be taken out of the mire into which it was plung'd, and not be suffer'd to enter into it more, and disfigure itself a-new, but rather cleans'd as well as may be from its most gross and visible nastiness. In this manner also must the re-establishment of the Soul begin. She must cease to do Evil and to immerse her self into Sin, and actively to Purify her self, as well as she can, from the Defilements she sees and discerns in her self; and this is the Active Purification.

XVIII.

(2) Second resemblance which explains the first effect of Passive Purification. Loss of both outward and inward forms.

XVIII. Secondly, Our Image must be brought before the Fire, which will presently set it a melting on

the

the outside, and quite spoil its Features and Complexion. This is done in the Soul when the bright Fire of God's Love comes to invest her: She immediately loses her form: All her pretended Beauty and Resplendence is dash'd: and without also every thing seems to forsake and go against her: Men, Accidents, Misfortunes are an outward Fire that beat upon, shock and deface the Figure she formerly made in the World and in her own Opinion: And yet this is but a small Matter: She must look for other guise usage whenever the Fire breaks into her interior to purify it.

XIX. In the third place, this same Image must be melted down and cast anew, by a Fire that piercing and dissolving it, first mingles all the good and ill in it into one troubled and foul mass, that has neither form nor comeliness, seeming nothing but a heap of ordure, which sends out noisome fumes when the inward corruption is stir'd by the piercing heat of the Fire. Thus it goes with the Soul when the Fire of Purification pierces her interior. All her Faculties and Powers, her Understanding, Will, Reason and the rest, are turn'd into a confus'd and dark Chaos, where nothing is to be seen but disorder, blackness, impurity and stench. This is a terrible Catastrophe to a Soul that had heretofore truly desir'd God, and lov'd him to the utmost of her Power, and verily thought she had in some measure found him, and to get fuller Possession of him, strove to desire him with all possible ardor: And now instead of finding God she finds Sin; she look'd for Life and meets with Death and Evil: She finds in her inward ground God's Enemy closely sticking to her, she her self an Enemy to God; she meets with nothing but what is an horror to her, she sees & feels nothing in herself but insufferable stench. Thinks she has lost God and her Salvation; sees no more any difference in her between just and unjust; because all her past Righteousness appears to her abominable. And if God should quicken her desire, and more and more enflame it with restlessness, sensibility and ardor towards things Divine, and yet she can meet with nothing but the infinite fund of her Miseries, I know not if Hell it self can be more tormenting than this. I am sure this is to her a Temporal Hell, which to enhance her Miseries she then thinks will be everlasting. See what

Chap.
V.

XIX. (3)
*Universal
manifestation of
Evil and
Corruption.*

Chap. is said in this Case by *Job* and *David*, by *Matthew*
 V. *Weyer*, and *John of the Cross*, that may be stiled the
 Four Evangelists of the Divine Purification.

XX. (4) XX. In the Fourth place, the Fire still agitating the
 Separati- matter of the dissolv'd Image, and growing hotter and
 on of the hotter, so separates the corrupt parts that lay within
 the pure from the rest, that all the Pollution that was mingled in
 the im- the interiour is collected and thrown outward; the
 pure, scum and dross do then cover the whole Surface, and
 which be- you would say, the more the Fire acted upon this mass,
 ing the more impure and worse it still grew. This is what
 thrown besets the Soul that God continues to purify with his
 off the in- Divine Fire, which is the Light of his Grace, whose
 teriour Divine motions attacking all that is in the Soul, not the
 floats up- least thing escaping, do divide the pure from the impure,
 on the gather this impure on a heap and cast it outward, that
 exterior is to say, the Divine Light acting upon every thing
 of the that is in the Soul, manifests and brings to her Sense
 Soul, or (which is as 'twere her outside) all the Dispositions of
 upon her the Soul that are opposite to the motions of the Di-
 sensitive vine Light. This Soul seeing her self cover'd with a
 part. thick heap of ordures, which wrap up and hide all the
 good that she has (which then appears not) she thinks
 she falls from bad to worse, and that she is undone, a
 monster and good for nought, or in the Prophets
 Words, *a broken Vessel, and cut off and rejected of God*.
 This impurity that covers the Sense of the Soul, is
 push'd out of her, that is, out of her consent and heart,
 by the horror and aversion she has for it, as well as by
 the Divine motions which the Light excites through all
 her interiour.

XXI. (5) XXI. In the Fifth place, when the impurities of this
 Trials Liquid Mass being driven to the Surface, are separated
 and La- thence, and the Mass remains pure, it is still kept on
 bours to the Fire for a while, not only to refine it from the least
 preserve Particles of Impurity that may yet be left in it, but
 exercise also to give it a temper and consistence that may for
 and con- the time to come secure it against Putrefaction. We
 firm the find the Fire gives the Particles of Liquors a closeness
 Soul. and incorruptibility they had not before, whether by
 polishing and smoothing their Figures, or by driving
 out what may take Corruption, or by casting them into
 a more solid form. Now during this Operation, this
 same

same matter, though pure, has not nevertheless as yet the Lines and Form of the first Beauty, nor the quiet Subsistence, as I may say, that it should have; it is still under great violence; having no other motions but the continual agitations it receives from the Fire. No more is the Soul, which God is a purifying, absolutely discharg'd upon her having driven outward the hidden Impurities of her ground, how pure soever she may be afterwards, and howsoever purify'd the good that remains in her may be, as are the Divine Vertues of Faith, Hope and Charity, and the rest of the Vertues depending on these, yet must they all with the inward ground, to keep them perfectly pure and from corruption for the Future, and to acquire the habit of Suffering themselves to be govern'd purely by the motions of God, be still for some considerable time try'd, shaken, and turn'd this way, and t'other way, as I may say, by God, 'till that readiness the Soul has to guide and direct her Vertues and Faculties, and to consider them with regard to herself and her own, be entirely lost, and turn'd to the contrary habit: 'Till that self-complacence and spiritual self-love, so habituated and rooted in the bottom of the Heart, and so apt upon every turn to mix and spring up again with the very Graces and Gifts of God, and that generally does so, be quite extirpated. For 'tis only to root out this self-love that the Purifying Operations of God last so long, and that they are carry'd on, though with some intermission, through all spiritual states according as the Soul proceeds therein; for it lurks every where, and would fain fix itself; and the Lord's design is to drive it from place to place, 'till not finding where to settle, it be utterly destroy'd. During these Operations, the Soul is in extreme Anxieties. She sees nothing divine in her self. Faith, Hope and Charity, and other Vertues, which she truly loves, and really possesses, are to her invisible and insensible; that she may learn no longer to love the divine good as something of her own. She believes she has them not; and so the agitations she feels in this Purification, leave her in a comfortless state, and seem utterly to destroy and damn her, and all the good she might have. These seem to her to be the waves and storms of God that not only go over her, but into her

Pf. 42. to sink and drown her, according to the Expression
8. of the *Psalmist*.

XXII. (6) *Spiritual Aridity and De-
religion.* Sixthly, When the matter of our Image is
again melted and purify'd, and has been long enough
on the Fire, it is taken off for a while and set to cool,
to know whether it be come to a due Purity and Tem-
per : And then this Liquor becomes an irregular
lump, void of all heat and motion, and of no use at
all, lying at the bottom of a Vessel without any actual
Light, tho' in itself luminous and transparent. This
does excellently well represent that state of Purificati-
on, wherein the Soul after all the foregoing Opera-
tions finds her self in dryness, and seems to have nei-
ther heat nor motion for what is good ; nor any aver-
sion, or at least not enough, to evil, being as to God
and Sin dull and senseless, void of all resentments either
of love or contrition, or of any thing else, as if she was
(in the Words of the *Psalmist*) a Beast or an Owl
without Light and without Understanding. God by
this means lets the Soul see what she can of her self do
tho' she were without Sin : That she can give her self
neither motion nor a divine form : But that she is
truly a lump of dull matter in the Hands of her Ma-
ker. And this is of all divine means the most power-
ful to preserve her from Pride, and to plant in her true
and solid Humility, which can hardly be found in a
Soul before this Operation.

XXIII. (7) *Re-
storation
to the
first state.* Lastly, To reduce our Image to its Primitive
state of Beauty, the matter of it is again brought to
the Fire, and there melted by a gentle heat, not so vio-
lently as to consume or make it throw up either smoke
or scum as before, and after this slow liquefaction,
this matter is cast into a new mould, which Fashions
and gives it such subsistence as suits its state, and the use
the Maker of a piece so perfectly re-establish'd shall
from that time forward be pleas'd to put it to. Thus
likewise it goes with the Soul after all the preceeding
Preparations and Operations : God puts her once more
into the shining Fire of his Love, which is no longer
painful and tormenting as formerly, but does only
softly handle and bow it, pour it and cast it, as I may
say, into the mould of his own most perfect and holy
will, into the form of God himself and of the Holy
Spirit,

Spirit, who bends it this way and that way, works it, and gives it that Posture and Subsistence which it ought to have to be an Image holy, perfect and well-pleasing to God. From that time the Soul is Regenerate: Is a new Creature, wherein all is new; knowledge, will, affections, senses, conversation, Heaven and Earth, in a word, God, Christ and all. It is a perfect piece tho' it must for the time to come still encrease in perfection, and grow up from one degree to another, from Childhood to Youth, and so on to Man's Estate? 'Tis God that henceforth governs this Creature in a most special manner, that disposes of it in things great and small, does with it what he pleases, places it where he has a mind, as a Statuary does a beautiful Statue, that he has made, which lets itself be order'd by the will of him that made it.

XXIV. This great work of the Purification of the Soul is of all God's Works that which he sets his Heart most upon, and wherein he does most illustriously manifest the infinite depths of his Power, Wisdom, Righteousness and Mercy, in a word wherein he most appears God. Hence it is that when God has a mind to glorify himself most, or when his Saints have the same design, they do in their praises of him use such Considerations and Expressions as are taken from these wonderful manners whereby God afflicts, and kills to cure. See now, says he himself, see that 'tis I, 'tis I, I kill and I make alive; I wound and I heal, there is none that can deliver out of my Hand. The Lord, says Samuel's Mother, killeth and maketh alive; he bringeth down to Hell and bringeth up again. I, says he, make peace and create evil; I form the Light and create Darkness; (these are the Darkness and Afflictions of this saving Purification.) The Lord made all things for himself, even the Wicked for the glory of God in the Day of Calamity. Which Words (to make this remark by the way) don't signify as the Predestinarians would have them, that God created Men to be Wicked or to be Damn'd for Wickednesses, he decreed to let them fall into to glorify his Righteousness by their Damnation; but their meaning of them is, that God makes use of the Wicked and his Wickedness, and also that he lays before him his Wickedness, by the Light of Purification, and makes him feel it, to be glorify'd by him in the extremity of

Chap.
V.

XXIV.
Purification one
of the
most considerable
of the
Divine
Works.

Deut.
32. 39.

1 Sam.
2. 6.
Isaiah
45. 7.

Prov.
16. 4.

his

Chap.
V.

his Afflictions which are inseparable from his Divine Light in the Sinner : For then Man sees, feels and confesses himself Wicked, and even the Divine Light seems to him either to cause or increase his Evils ; and yet he glorifies God, saying, *Lord thou art just, and thy Judgments are right* ; to say nothing of the glory that accrues to God when the Wickedness is purg'd, and the Day of Calamity is past. This is the ground of most of *David's* Psalms.

XXV.
Divers
varieties
in way of
Purifica-
tion.

XXV. It must moreover be observ'd in this Divine Purification, that tho' in substance it be but one and the same in all that shall be sav'd ; yet it varies in a Thousand particular manners according to the different dispositions of those concern'd in it ; nay, and often with respect to the very same Person. God orders this according to his own wonderful Wisdom. He leads Souls to Purity by several ways, some by the way of tears, others by that of a sensible contrition, others by the ways of sorrows, dereliction, darkness, driness, insensibilities, inward or outward troubles. Sometimes he makes use of all these ways by turns, sometimes of one only ; sometimes they continue a longer, other times a shorter space. Sometimes they are intermixt with consolations (especially where Nature is more weak) sometimes not. The Hundred and Seventh (according to the vulgar Translation, the hundred and Sixth) *Psalms* of *David* understood mystically (which is the most Profitable Sense) gives an excellent description and enumeration of some of these ways.

XXVI.
Two sorts
of Per-
sons to
whom Pu-
rification
will be
more
painful.

XXVI. But among so many Persons of different States that are to be purified, there are chiefly two sorts of them that must be led through the most rough, the most dark, the most terrible ways. These are in the first place the Learn'd, or such as have had large Talents of Science and Knowledge ; and secondly those that are afterwards to have, both in time and eternity, great and signal Favours from God. The one must see and feel all their rare and belov'd Talents, their Wit, their Knowledge, their pretended Riches and Vertues, all perish and burn as it were, in the Fire of the divine Justice : They shall see themselves tumbled down in proportion to the rank they have rais'd themselves to, and feel themselves reduc'd to extreme Ignorance and Poverty, as great at least, not to say infinitely greater,

than

than has been their fancy'd abundance ; because nothing of what they have acquir'd before their Purification is able to subsist before the Justice of God ; and consequently all must perish before it, and before the Introduction of Justifying Grace.

The other needing to be deeply grounded in Humility and Power, fully guarded against Pride, Vain-glory, and Self-satisfaction, to receive the highest Favours from God, so as they may promote their Salvation, must likewise for a long time, and sensibly, feel their own nothingness, their vanity and dryness, hardness, incapacity and unprofitableness ; a sad and dreadful Tryal. And generally whoever has been, or is more-especially inclin'd to Pride, to Self-satisfaction, Self-love and Complacency, must be purify'd and preserv'd from these great and capital Sins by ways exceedingly frightful to the mind ; for there is a necessity that in such Persons God works Purification without their knowing of it, that he produce in them the purity of Vertue, a Faith the most pure and disinterested, Charity, and the rest, without their being sensible of it, the most deep Sorrow while they think they have no such thing, and the most clear Light without their perceiving it ; because that were they conscious to themselves that they possess'd these Divine Goods, they would thence draw matter of Pride, Vanity, and Self complacency ; and therefore (O cruel and yet infinitely gracious mercy of our God !) they must be led into Life by Death, into Plenty by Scarcity, into Refreshment by Dryness, into the tenderness of Divine Love by hardness of Heart, into the Light and Joys of Heaven, by darkness and insensibility ; a lamentable state, and more than lamentable to such as seek nothing but God ! and yet a state in which they chearfully acquiesce ; for amidst these insensibilities and dryness of the Soul, the Holy Spirit is secretly at the bottom of the Heart, who there produces an acquiescence insensible, 'tis true, but yet real and solid. Whence it is, that such Persons are content to be even in Hell, and that they with Job say, *though he slay me, yet will I trust in him ;* And again, *'Tis the Lord, let him do what seemeth him good.*

Job 13.
15.

XXVII.
Three Difficulties about the necessity of Purification.

XXVII. Some may possibly question the Necessity or Truth of this Divine Purification, upon these or the like Considerations; that neither the Scriptures nor the Examples of Saints seem to give any great Countenance to it; that there are Instances of those that have been perfectly purify'd and put into a State to see God, without having pass'd by these ways; as the Thief on the Cross, and others: And that lastly, there would be few sav'd, even of those that are converted to God, if such a course must necessarily be gone through before God could be enjoy'd; there being but few that have undergone these severe Trials. These three Objections we shall endeavour to Answer.

XXVIII.
That the Scripture speaks much of this way of Purification.

XXVIII. Nor is it very hard to do if to the first; for in the Scripture there are whole Books, as that of *Job* and the *Psalms*, that have almost no other design, as well as the Example of these two Saints, and of so many others, that are propos'd as Models and living Instructions, to let us know what they that would be Saints and Friends of God are to expect and to suffer. It is sufficient if the Scripture lays two or three Examples before us, that by them we may understand the ways of God, and those that are his; nor is it necessary it should give a distinct Relation of all the particular Passages in the Lives of every one of the Saints in their arriving to Purification; and this is what should satisfy us.

XXIX.
Answer to the instance of the good Thief, who 'tis said went not through these severe Trials.

XXIX. As to the Instance of one of the Thieves that was Crucify'd with *Jesus Christ*, and was so soon put into a State to see God without going through, as it should seem, the ways of such a kind of Purification; to this there are several things may be said. First it appears from the Account the Gospel gives of what pass'd between this Man, his Companion and *Jesus Christ*, that he was not so wicked and prophane a wretch as is commonly imagin'd, and indeed that he had the habitual fear of God, and some Love of his Neighbour and of Justice, and it should seem that the Crime for which he was put to Death, was a sin of Surprise, into which, though a good Man, he suffer'd himself to be blindly hurried by his Companion; for if *evil Communication corrupt good Manners*, as *St. Paul* says, much more may it betray into a sin of Surprise,

into

Chap.
V.

into a Robbery or a Murther, one that is no very bad Man, when he is off his Guard, in the height of his Passion, and encouraged, set on, and seconded by a wicked friend. *David*, as much a Saint and Prophet as he was, fell much more grossly, and that into premeditated Murthers, and lay long in his Crimes, and did not so soon rise out of them. Is it then so incredible a thing that one that fears God should fall into a Robbery or Murther by surprize and the instigation of another, and that thereupon being apprehended and condemned to the Gallows as a Robber, we should see the fear of God and the Love of Justice awaken again in the bottom of his Heart?

Now this being so, it is no wonder that he needed a less painful and shorter Purification than we may imagine his ought to have been; besides that in all appearance neither learning nor worldly greatness had fill'd his Heart with Pride and Vain-glory, since apparently he was neither very learned nor great in the World; which States (as has been observed) need a very painful and long Purification. His dreadful, yet patiently born sufferings, were a considerable compensation for the length and sharpness of the Purification of his Soul, but above all, the generous and entire Resignation of himself to God, his wonderful Faith, his hoping against hope, were so.

We may be sure God does not willingly because he will, draw out things to a tedious length. His Operations are on his part all ready, all perfect in a moment: but that which makes Men lie so long under them, is the Fault of their natural and habitual Indispositions, of their slowness, and because they do not universally enough, or at least, not generously and resolutely enough abandon themselves to God. Of two Vessels let down into the Sea, that which has the straitest neck will be much longer a filling, than the other of a large and wide Mouth, though they be both in the same Sea, and surrounded with abundance of Waters. There are some Metals that in the midst of the Fire and Light are not seductile, will not be so easily penetrated nor clear'd from their grossness, as others, that are in an instant freed from their foulness. Of two Souls that are a purifying, 'tis certain that that
which

Chap.
V.



which absolutely and entirely strips itself of itself, not seeking itself in its very Salvation and Eternity, leaving itself wholly to the Righteous Will of God above all regard to its own Temporal and Eternal Advantage or Disadvantage; It is certain I say, that such a one is incomparably sooner, and with more ease purify'd, than another that resigns not itself to God; but with regard to its own Benefit or Salvation, and that is in horrible Anxieties and Terrors upon the uncertainty of its State. Such a Soul has a great deal to suffer before it comes up to this necessary Point, not to seek its self even in its Salvation. All Souls almost, even the very best, are but of this moderate Temper. Yet Grace has its Hero's as well as nature, but they are rare. There are few *Enochs*, *Abrahams*, *Moses's*, *Elias's*, *Mary Magdalens*, and good *Thieves*. It may be they are the only ones in their kind. These exceptions therefore should not make us question the truth of the general Rule and way.

And at last, how can we tell how much this Man suffer'd more both in Body and Soul after the promise that *Christ* made him of being with him in Paradise. How know we whither *this to day* signifies only the term of a natural day, and not some longer time, which in Scripture is often taken for the whole time that this World lasts, as when it says, *To day, if you will hear his Voice. To day whilest it is called to day.* Not that I would determine any thing in the matter; but likewise neither can we be positively assur'd that the Purification of this Man lasted but this day, or indeed but the time of this Life, and that it did not continue some space of time after his Death.

XXX.

Answer
to the
third Ob-
jection.
Converts
that have
not un-
dergone
this Pu-
rification
in their

XXX. Some will say, this favours of the empty and idle Imaginations of Purgatory; and that's just the Point must next be examined, and from the due stating of which I shall frame my answer to the third difficulty formerly alludg'd. It must be confess'd, as was objected, and as 'tis confirm'd by Scripture, that there will be few that are sav'd. But it does not hence follow, that those who die in a state of true Conversion to God, and yet have not finish'd the course of their Purificati-

Life time shall do it after.

on,

on, shall be damn'd upon the supposition, that, this Purification, such as we have describ'd it, being absolutely necessary for Salvation, they have not yet gone through it; because after Death there is still for such as are departed in the Grace of God. a time of Purification, during which they shall be cleans'd from all the Impurities, which they were not purify'd from whilst they liv'd upon the Earth. This Truth shall be the Subject of the following Chapter, where we shall still have a fuller view of the necessity of Purification in itself.

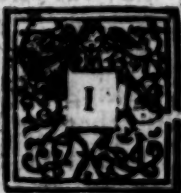
Chap.
VI.

CH A P. VI.

Of the Purification of the Soul after Death.

That there is such a state for Souls that depart in a state of Grace, but not of perfect Holiness and Purity.

I.



F there be any thing capable to convince us of the Blindness and Folly of Human Understanding, 'tis in my Opinion the Doctrine of Purgatory. 'Tis almost turn'd into Farce and Comedy. 'Tis well known how all

Parties that differ from the *Roman*, make it the Subject of their Raillery, and I question not but many a one will burst out a laughing at the very sight of the Title of this Chapter. The most understanding part of those in the Church of *Rome* do make but a jest of it as well as others; but he that laughs last, laughs best. I am, I thank God, very free from Partiality, and all blind adhering to any Party whatever, binding my self only to Truth, and therefore you may believe and be assured that what I shall say on this Subject, it shall be only with my pure aiming at Truth, and the Force of Truth itself shall dictate. 'Tis by this that

I. That it is mere Ignorance that makes Men Scoff at the Doctrine of Purgatory. See the Letters of Mr. Patrin, Let. 62. 67, 70, &c.

I

Chap. VI. I hope to make this Doctrine so evident that none, but such as will not see, shall question the Soundness of it. And it may be this may serve to convince some of their Ignorance, and keep them for the future from laughing at Divine Things they understand not. As those of whom St. Jude speaks, v. 10. *Who speak evil of those things they understand not, and abuse to their own Damnation and Corruption the divine things which they understand and expound naturally as brute Beasts.*

II. Advice
and Cau-
tion for
what fol-
lows.

II. In the first place I declare, that I design not to go about to defend all the Stories, and if you please Fables, that are commonly told of Purgatory, of it's Place, its material Fire, of certain Priviledges and Means either of not coming thither, or quickly getting out; things, I easily grant, for the most part fabulous, though there be some Truth among these heaps of News from the other World; For I can't find in my Heart to reckon among Fables the Relations we meet with in the Writings of the Divine Teresa, of *Johannes a Cruce*, in the Life and Sermons of *Tanterus Suso*, and of others inlighten'd by the Holy Ghost, and particularly, of the incomparable Mrs. *Bourignon*, who besides the Reasons of this Truth, which the Divine Light suggested to her, tells us, she was assur'd from God, that there was a Purgatory after Death for Souls of such as dying in God's Favour, were not yet perfectly Holy. I am so far from making a Mock at what these Holy Souls have said of it, that the Veneration I have for them, and for the Spirit of God in them inclin'd me not to hearken any longer to my old Prejudices, but examine seriously a matter of such Importance. And I confess, had it not been for the consideration I had for these Holy Persons, I should have been so far from discovering, or so much as examining the solid Grounds of this great Truth, that as to that point I should yet have made one of the many scoffers of this Age, both among the Learned and Unlearned.

III. What
we are
to under-
stand by
Purgato-
ry.

III. That what I write on this Subject may not lie open to the Raillery and Jest so commonly cast upon the odd Ideas some frame to themselves of Purgatory, I would willingly make use here of another Word. Purification is too general a one, as signifying also what

what is done in this Life; that of Purgation belongs to Physick; I shall use that of Purification after Death, or rather without troubling my self about Words, shall content my self to declare that I do not by Purgatory so much understand a certain Place, where there are fancied certain Torments, certain lettings in and out of Souls, as a certain state more or less dureable of a Soul that having deceas'd in God's Favour, and nevertheless having not yet overcome all its habitual imperfections, nor rooted out all its known and unknown sins, is invested by the divine Grace that acts strongly on its Imperfections till they be entirely effaced, and there remain in it none but such Dispositions as are wholly Divine and Heavenly.

IV. I will not here decide, whether there be corporeal Pains, or any certain Place design'd for this State. I think it rashness to be too particular in what is corporeal here; yet as I am of Opinion * that after Death the Soul is always join'd to the most considerable part of the Body, and that the Body necessarily requires a place, and that there are in the Body disorderly Motions, and such as are opposite to those the Spirit of God raises in it, I see no absurdity to think that a Soul, whose Body has still some disorders that must be redress'd, must needs suffer by reason of its Body, when the Divine Light shall act upon it to purify it: besides that the Divine Light cannot act purely and strongly upon a Soul, but there will result from this Soul upon the Body which is united to it, Impressions very lively and strong, which will do violence to it as long as there remain in it any Disorders, and this is an Operation which must needs be wrought in some Place. So that those who have spoken of Purgatory, as of a place where corporeal Sufferings are undergone, have not been so much out as some have imagin'd; had they not of their own head been too particular in this Point; of their own head, I say, for as these things are in themselves particular and determinate, there is no doubt but they may be particularly set down; but by whom? either by Revelation or Experience; in all other Cases Men run great Hazard of telling Fables, when they will be too particular here, unless we say that those that have been

Chap.
VI.

IV.
Whether there be corporeal pains, and any certain place for the Purification after Death.
* See the Oeconomy before the Incarnation
s. II. n. 18, 19.

parti-

Chap.
VI.

particular in these matters, and have represented the pains of the Purification after Death by certain Torments in certain places intended it only by way of Similitude and Parable, which none ought to find fault with them for, seeing the Scripture itself speaking of the Torments of a damned Soul (as of that of Dives in the Gospel) sets before our Eyes the Image of a Place and Material Torments, and even the Idea of a Soul organiz'd, and begging some Water to cool its Tongue amidst the Flames; but let us leave what is corporeal and come to what is spiritual.

V. *What is here to be treated of.*

V. I suppose I shall be ask'd in the first place, what Scripture proof I have for the Truth, or if you please rather, for the Opinion, I advance concerning the Purification of the Soul after Death. I could begin my Proofs by giving more than one from Scripture; but as I am sensible the Disputers are already arm'd with their Glosses to enervate them, and to perplex what is to be treated of leisurely and by steps, I will begin by giving a clear Idea of this Doctrine; and such Proofs as shall be drawn from that Idea, as well as such Proofs as shall arise from the Idea of God, of his Attributes, of his ways of Procedure, from the Nature of the Soul, its Course and Manners. Afterwards I will endeavour to Answer some Objections and Difficulties which are usually rais'd from this Doctrine. I begin with laying down some Truths, which will serve for a Foundation to the following Discourse.

VI. *Some fundamental truths: that without perfect Holiness none can see God.*
Mat. 5. 8.
2 Cor. 6. 14.

VI. First, We lay this down as a Fundamental Truth, that none can see God or enjoy Salvation if he be not so perfectly Holy as to have in him nothing that is ill, either secret or open, habitual or actual, nor the least Spot in the World: For as long as there is the least ill remaining, the Soul is not actually admitted to the beatifick Vision of God. I think none can doubt of this Truth that have never so little read the Holy Scriptures, that tell us in a thousand Places, *That we must have a pure Heart to see God; that there is no Fellowship between Light and Darkness; that without Holiness none shall see the Lord; that nothing that*

Heb. 12. 14. Rev. 21. 27.

is defil'd shall enter into his Kingdom; with an infinite Number of like Passages.

VII. Secondly, 'tis certain that such as are truly Converted to God are in a state of Grace and Salvation though sin be yet in them, and their old Adam be not yet dead. I mean this, that if one full of sins does truly turn away from them his Desire and his Heart, and turns them wholly, sincerely and resolutely towards God, he shall by God be received into Favour, although his habitual sins and their Root be not yet effaced nor torn up from the bottom of his Heart; much more are they in Favour with God who have already made good progress in the Mortification and Crucifixion of their old Man, and want but very little of attaining perfect Purity. I believe these Truths will hardly be question'd, we are so ready to Favour whatever promises us Salvation; 'tis rather to be fear'd Men will be too remiss in their Application; which yet they will avoid, if they will but think seriously of what has been said of true Conversion, and of the necessary Conditions which are requir'd in the Desires of a Heart that gives up itself and is truly turned to God, without which, Conversion is but a Fiction of a Heart that deceives itself, and is deceived by the Devil. Nor do I say, that those that are truly converted to God, though there be in them still some evil, shall certainly be saved, and that they may promise themselves the continuance of God's Favour; for there will be no such thing unless they continue all their Life long to persevere and advance more and more in Mortification of themselves and Sanctification; but if they should happen to die in the beginning or middle of their Course, constantly proceeding in Holiness, but not having yet compleated their Purification, and so Death should take them away in a state of Life not yet entirely Holy, what wou'd then become of them?

VIII. It can't be said this is either a feign'd or impossible Supposition. This is a matter of Fact which I lay down for a Foundation, that there have and still do die such who are converted to God, and are by Death taken away in a state not yet Holy; such as have not yet conquer'd their Spiritual Enemies nor raz'd out all the ill Habits of their Souls.

Chap. VII.

VII. The 2d truth, Those that die in a state of Conversion, though still imperfect and defil'd, are in a state of Grace and Salvation.

VIII.

That many do really die in such a state.

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Chap.

VI.



The case standing thus, I demand what becomes of these Souls? those I have at present to do with, must according to their Principles necessarily say one of these two things, either that they are damn'd or sav'd; for they own but these two states after Death: But I am going to shew, that on what side soever they turn themselves, they must fall into visible falsities and absurdities, until they acknowledge this capital Truth I have here undertaken to prove.

IX. *That such as depart in this imperfect state shall not be damn'd.*

IX. To say, such as die in the state we have been speaking of are damn'd, because they have indeed some Uncleaness and Impurities still in them, is what, I believe, they will not hold: This is against the Second Principle, the Truth of which was granted but now, as well as against the word of God, who promises Life to the converted Sinner from the very time he begins his Conversion: This Wounds the Charity both of God and Men; and we must despair of the Salvation of almost all the World, if all that die not in a State of perfect Holiness are damn'd. And 'tis this (and not the Doctrine of the Purification after Death) that ought to be look'd on as cruel and barbarous, and unbecoming the Goodness and Mercy of God.

X. *That such cannot actually be saved without an inward Change.*

X. It will doubtless be said, such Persons shall be saved; and if so, I demand shall they be saved without any change wrought in them, or with one? To say, they shall be saved without a real change, is what cannot be maintain'd; for since 'tis supposed they departed in a state partly impure and polluted, the ill Habits of their Faculties not being yet remov'd and rectify'd, and the very ground of their Soul having still some evil Roots remaining in it; should they be sav'd without any change, then might one enjoy Salvation and the sight of God tho' he continu'd still impure and polluted; which is against the Principle lay'd down and own'd. It must therefore be said, there must be a change in the Faculties and Habits of these Souls, and in their most central Part.

Upon this I demand further; shall this change be made in a Moment, or in a manner the Soul shall not be sensible of; or whether it will not require some time, and our Mind be very sensible of it? In the Answer to this lies the whole stress of the Question.

Xk. I

XI. I cannot think any Man of so unhappy a Temper, as to fancy, if he think well on't, that a Soul whose very Nature it is to be most sensible of what passes within it self, especially when 'tis deliver'd from the Body that lulls it asleep and stupifies it, should in a moment, in the twinkling of an Eye, by way of Enchantment and Sorcery, find it self Metamorphos'd in its Nature, Faculties and Habits, to a quite contrary state, and yet not feel or know how: I confess, this is to me an inexplicable Riddle, and if there be any thing in the World that deserves to be look'd on as a vain and chimerical Fancy, 'tis this Supposition that makes the Soul a Stock, its Faculties I know not what, its Habits nothing, and the Operation of God an imperceivable Charm! I shall give a Reason for this presently; in the mean while this general consideration will force us unavoidably to establish and acknowledge this Truth; *That a Soul which departs in a state of true Conversion departs in a state of Salvation, tho' there be still in it some Pollutions and Sins; but that it shall not actually enjoy his Salvation without a Supervening Change, by which its very Centre, Faculties, and their perverse Habits, are invested and attack'd by a Principle that gives them a contrary Bent, and by a constant and long warring against the Souls evil Dispositions until it has kill'd and rooted them out, and with labour and pain implants in it Habits quite contrary.* And this is Purgatory, or the state of Purification after Death; which I look on as one of the most solid and fundamental Truths in the Oeconomy of Salvation. The Reason of this shall be drawn from the Consideration of God, the Nature of the Soul, and its state of Grace. We begin with the Consideration of God.

XII. God is Just. This is an Eternal and Incorruptible Truth, which we learn both from Scripture and our own Hearts. This Justice of God consists in suffering it to happen to every one according to their Works. Upon this immutable Principle it follows, that such as have done ill and died in the Will and determination to continue in it should be eternally damn'd, should find and feel the Works of their Hands, and

XI. *Proofs of a painful Purification.*

(1.) *That this change cannot be made but with time, pain and labour.*

XII.

Many more Demonstrations of this Truth.

(2.) *That it is grounded*

on God's Justice. How that treats Souls after Death.

Chap.
VI.

should eat the Fruit whose Root they were willing eternally to preserve. But, that such as have done ill, and died in the sincere and absolute Will and Determination eternally to do good, and have already begun to do so, must after Death, according to God's Justice, meet with both the Good and the Ill they shall have done: But now, what is it to meet with the Ill, to find it in one's self, to feel and taste the Fruits and Effects of it? 'Tis to have lively Sentiments of our Actions, and such Sentiments as include the privation both of the one infinite, and of all other sorts of good. And this is properly to feel and taste Evil. Now these Sentiments must needs be full of extreme Pains and Anxieties, but as 'tis supposed such Persons have died in full Resolution to forsake and absolutely extirpate what is ill (and that according to the same supposition they have not yet done it) so must they meet with what is ill in them, with a constant desire to get clear of it, and with an hatred of its Root and Source, and all this temper'd with a submission to Divine Justice, to which they give Glory, for making them thus taste the fruits of their sinful Will, God's Grace mixing with this desire (which is the true Faith) assists and strengthens it by its Divine Light, which after it has one by one invested the remaining Corruptions of such a Soul does by its infinite Omnipotence overpower, conquer, and quite drive them out; but it costs such a Soul, God knows how much Pain and Torment before her Purification be perfected.

XIII. O-
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God
would
deny his
Justice,
and fa-
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ness.
The
wonder-
ful in
partiality of God's Justice

XIII. Thus does God's Justice by rendering to every Man according to his works, pay even the good themselves with their evil works, when they have not undergone the chastisement and punishment of them in this Life. Were it not so, it were impossible to have a clear Notion of God's Justice, that always holds the Scales even, both to the good and bad. There would otherwise be a visible partiality in God's dealings with his most intimate and best Friends, that have not entered into the Kingdom of Heaven, but through a thousand Sufferings both of Soul and Body, whereas wicked Men that have liv'd worldly, if they turn from their Sins and

die in the Grace of God (who wills not the Death of a Sinner) or careless Men that have since their Conversion lived negligently, shall be jollily saved, though still cover'd and cloath'd (as I may say) with their old wicked Habits. But it will not be so. God's Justice will hold fast the Ballance, and will make these late Converts, and these negligent ones, taste the Fruits of their Sins as well as his Servants and faithful Friends have done whilst they were upon Earth, where often they had peace neither within nor without. God will not be brought to deny his Justice, nor suffer those that have not felt in this Life, as they ought, the effects of their sins, not to feel them at all. God cares not to leave in our frail Nature such a dreadful Inclination to all sorts of ill, and let it follow without fear the Motions of its corruption, and never mortify and resist it. And indeed is it not true (and let every one lay his hand upon his Conscience, that that which keeps us in our Remissness, and makes us not hate, as we ought, all sorts of ill, that makes us not flee all sin and unrighteousness, as a Serpent, that causes us sometimes to sin against our Light, is our persuasion that if we repent and die at last in contrition, we shall easily obtain Pardon for them, and so all shall be made up. Let us for once grant these People what they suppose, that they shall one time or other be converted. What then? Do they fancy, that God will not therefore be just to them, and that their sins shall vanish by way of Inchantment? They will doubtless pursue them, nor will they get rid of them till after many fightings and strivings; till after many a stroke of the Divine Light against their rooted Darkness and inveterate Sins. God will not bate them one, and their Sentiments of them then will be more afflicting than all the most painful Evils of this World, to say nothing of their duration, which will be much longer then; they will find themselves so deeply engaged in Chains of Darkness, that they shall, it may be, be forced to continue the Travail of getting clear of them to the very last Judgment, without so much as knowing whether they shall be saved or not, and without receiving any comfort from the secret Acquiescence which God's Grace works in them to consent as they

Chap. VI. do, to their damnation before the adorable Justice of God. The operations of a just God upon a Soul voluntarily defil'd, are no sport, and we may say of it St. Paul's words, *that it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.* Let us live therefore without flattering our selves, that God will pass by any one of our sins, especially voluntary ones. He does upon our true Conversion take away the Eternity of their Punishment, but as long as sin, which we have by our particular Actions sown in the bottom of our Souls, is not pluck'd up by the Roots, this Operation must be undergone, either in this or the other Life, and that for every sin that is left in us, without bating so much as one.

XIV. XIV. God is True. Though we did not consider *That Gods Truth is a Proof of this Doctrine.* his Justice, his Truth alone should perswade us of what hath been said; he hath told us a hundred and a hundred times in the Holy Scripture, *That he will render to every one according to his works, that he will judge both the just and the unjust, that every one shall receive in his Body (or in his Person) what he hath done whether good or evil;* and other such like Declarations. Psal. 62. 13. Rev. 22. 12. Ecclef. 3. 17. 2 Cor. 5. 10. Is this true with respect to the damned only, and not to the sav'd? or else is it true with respect to the good and not to the ill which those have done that shall be sav'd? were it so, God would speak Truth but by halves; but because he is perfectly true, it must be concluded, that also with regard to the evil that the good have committed, he will render to them according to their evil Deeds, as justly as he does to the wicked, excepting only the Eternity of their Torments; because the good have by Faith turn'd away their Heart from the eternal Principle of ill, and likewise excepting the secret Acquiescence the Spirit of God works in good Men that are under the Discipline of the Divine Justice, the good in their Purification, and the bad in Hell, are equally punish'd as to Sense, for equal sins, which is well known to all those that have pass'd through a perfect Purification in this Life. *Job* and *David* do more than once speak out this Truth, clearly complaining of the pains of Hell, though they be so little sensible here, in comparison of what they will be in the other. Now God being immutably true
(it

(it being impossible his Truth should become a Lie) it follows that such as have not found him so here, shall do it hereafter, which comes to the same with the truth we are endeavouring to prove.

Chap. VI.

XV. Another Proof of this Doctrine is taken from the consideration of God's Holiness, who can have no Fellowship, much less a perfect Union, such as he has in Heaven, with Souls sullied with the least sin. There being no doubt to be made of this, 'tis likewise an undeniable consequence from that Truth, that such Souls as are converted to God, but not at their Death, in a state of perfect Holiness, do not enjoy this Divine Union as long as there remains in them any Pollution. Therefore are they so long deprived of the sight of God. But still, because they are in a state of Grace and Salvation, this privation will be but temporal till the Relicks of sin are abolish'd in them. Now that this privation will prove painful and very sensible to a Soul that desires and loves God above all things, and cannot yet enjoy him, is plain of itself; but we shall see more Reasons of it presently. Here have we another Proof of the Truth which we are establishing, which is in substance nothing but a conclusion drawn from God's Holiness, viz. That converted Souls dying before they are Holy, are for sometime in a painful and sensible Deprivation of God's Presence.

XV (4.)
A Proof
of the
same
Truth
from Gods
Holiness.

XVI. It cannot be deny'd but almost all Men in the World have this Truth stamp'd on their Heart. I mean not here to go about to ground a Truth of Religion upon the Fables and Opinions of Heathens and Idolaters; yet are not the common Notions of Mankind to be rejected, and such as are thought to be founded immediately upon the Holiness of God. For in general these notions are a Divine Scripture, characters writ by the Finger of God himself, however Men may disfigure them by particular Additions of their own. Now all Men in general, Heathens, Idolaters, Turks, Jews, Greeks, and Latines, draw this inference from the consideration of the Justice and Holiness of God, that Souls departing in an impure state, must pass through a state of Purification, full of sensible Torment before they come to enjoy Rest and Happiness. In this general Point they all agree, whatever Fables

XVI. (5.)
That this
Truth is
a common
notion in
the con-
science
of all
Men.

Chap.
VI.

* See
Suicerus
Thesau-
rus Ec-
clesiasti-
cus, on
the Word
eternus.

they mix when they go to particularize the circumstances of this Purification. 'Tis well known, to mention the most considerable Parties, that it has been and is still the belief of the *Jewish Church**: That it was of the *Greek Fathers*, and is time out of Mind of the *Latin*: And lastly, that it would still have passed as a notion common to Mankind, had not some of late that understood nothing solidly in the Things of the Spirit endeavour'd to efface it. Joyn we therefore to other proofs of this Doctrine the common dictates of all Men's Consciences when they look upon God's Justice and Holiness, and compare them with the Impurities that the best Souls depart this Life with.

XVII.
(6) From
the consi-
deration
of the
sensibility
of the
Soul.

XVII. The nature of our Soul consider'd with the manner of God's operating suitably to his Nature, furnishes us with one demonstration more of this capital Truth. I suppose (and you may well grant me this supposition, for I am sure of it) I suppose, I say, that God has created the Soul of a nature most sensible; and that the production or divine Operation by which God hath made this sensibility, is not (without respect to God) one Operation by which he has denied himself or born false Witness of himself. Upon this (and likewise on the supposition that a Soul does depart with the remains of Sin in it) I say this Soul must needs have a very painful and afflicting sensation of it. For she must after Death necessarily have a sense of what is in herself much more lively than in this Life, the Soul in this Life by her Union with a stupid Body, is as it were asleep and doz'd, whereas then she is full awake in the whole extent of her vivacity. Now, then is ill or the privation of good in her? Therefore she must feel it in her. And how must she feel it in her? Can the sense which the Soul has of her want of some great good, the sense of the deprivation of the glorious presence of God, the sense that she has in her dispositions and bents, contrary to the inclinations and motions impressed on her by God, can these, think you, be sentiments of pleasure and satisfaction? Has God made the sensibility of the Soul of such a nature as it should apprehend and feel Evil, either as nothing or as a thing agreeable and charming?

Certainly

Certainly God should deny himself should he make a power of sensibility that should rest in Evil. 'Twould be to work an Acquiescence both for and in Sin, to produce approbation and consent to the absence of himself. In a word, 'twould be to confound God and ill thus to make them both sensible to the Soul after one and the same manner. All which being absolutely impossible it must needs be, that as the sensibility of the Soul is extremely delightful and agreeing when it enjoys its true object, so likewise must it be most removed from a state of delight and rest when she does not enjoy it, and has still in her dispositions repugnant to such enjoyments.

Chap.
VI.

This is the state of the imperfect Soul after Death, grounded upon these two unquestionable Truths; the one that God has made the Soul of a nature very sensible of what is in herself, (for he has not made her a stock or a nest of darkness, sleep and oblivion;) the other, that the Soul's Power of sensation was not created by God of such a nature, as to acquiesce and be pleas'd with the privation of the Presence of God, and with the Presence of Evil or Sin, be it little or great.

Further Proofs of the same Truth.

If we consider the Soul with respect to the state of Salvation and Glory, to which by the fulness of God's Grace she will at last be brought, we shall from that Consideration draw as many and as strong proofs of this Truth as from the last we propos'd. I'll set down some of the clearest and most considerable.

XVIII. 'Tis certain no Soul can be saved without knowing herself first or last: For Salvation cannot be founded upon Ignorance, therefore must the Soul that has sinn'd and has by her Sin infinite Misery within her, the Foundation of Hell and of all Ills, that has likewise false or only apparent Virtues, such a Soul I say must have a quick and lively sense of this before she can actually enjoy Salvation. For otherwise she would continue blind, would not fully know herself, and so could not be upon solid grounds humble, nor condemn herself

XVIII.
(7) Were
it not for
this, Sal-
vation
would be
founded
on Ignor-
ance.

Chap.
VI.

herself before God ; lastly, could neither leave nor detest her ills, nor their source. We have no aversion for what we are not sensible of, nor any infinite aversion for what we are but little sensible of ; what we ought to have any extreme aversion for we must be extremely sensible of. Such Sinners therefore as shall at last be saved, yet have not in their life-time known or felt their Miseries, their damnable state, their deformities, the stench and horror of their Sins, and the Fruits of them, shall, tho' dead before they actually enjoy Salvation, see and feel lively the miserable state of Sin, their Hell, their poverty, and filthiness, their emptiness of all good, the damnation they have deserved, and which was together with their Sin Fundamentally and in seed in the bottom of their Heart.

XIX. (8)

*Were it
not thus
we should
neither
truly
know or
relish ei-
ther God
or our Re-
demption.*

XIX. Were it not so (behold new and undoubted proofs) the Soul that was saved would not only be Ignorant as to what is past in herself, but could neither then, nor ever after know God and his Grace ; nor taste well the Pleasure God should communicate to her. To know truly, and perceive clearly, or feel sensibly, that that God is a Saviour, powerful, good, infinite ; an infinite deliverer from infinite miseries ; that he is a deliverer from Hell, that he is the true Redeemer that delivers and ransoms us from the Chains of Death and eternal Torment, to be sensible of all this as we ought, we must necessarily feel and see our selves Damn'd and in Hell, find our selves in the dungeons and chains of Death. 'Tis then we learn the necessity, the price and value of a Redeemer, what it is to be a Saviour, the great and unspeakable quality of a Deliverer. Then we have a clear knowledge and quick sense of what infinite Power is, when we find our selves laden with infinite Chains, and in an infinite inability to get clear of them. Then we come truly to understand his infinite Goodness, when we see our selves cover'd and pierc'd through with Evils and Afflictions infinite. 'Tis here only that we learn to call God our Saviour in such a manner as he deserves, otherwise we know not what we say and desire but languidly and remissly. But when we see and sensibly feel our selves Damn'd, when we see Hell within our selves, when we see our selves overwhelm'd and encompassed with infinite Miseries, which we see no likelihood to get out

of!

of ! O how heartily and with what truth and seriousness unexpressible, with what fervency of desire do we then call God OUR SAVIOUR, do we address our selves to him as the only SAVIOUR, besides whom there is none either in Heaven or Earth ! 'Tis then we see as *David* says, that 'tis he alone that does great and wonderful Things. What shall I say, this is the school wherein we learn to Glorify God, and to know the marvels of his great Power : 'Twas in this state that *David* learnt to make all his fervent and ardent Prayers, and all his admirable Songs. 'Twas hence he was deliver'd, when he rejoices in the God, that had lifted him up from the Gates of Death. Whoever has not gone through this course in his lifetime, and yet dies with true desires after God, must necessarily go through it after Death, unless we hold that such Souls will not be sensible that God is their Saviour, nor truly Glorify him in Eternal Life. Which being absurd and ridiculous, we should yield to the Truth, that there is such a state to be gone through after Death by all such as have not done it here.

Chap.
VI.

Pl. 86. 8.

XX. 'Tis visible that without this they cannot well understand the greatness of the favour God does them. XX. (9)
Salvation and Damnation, Heaven and Hell, supreme *Except there be such a state we shall be incapable of the Divine Consolations and Tendernesses.*
Happiness and infinite Misery, Light and Darkness, Comfort and Affliction, Refreshment and Aridity, are Things relative, nor can we understand the one perfectly, much less prove and perceive it without the other. For some of them, as Consolation, Refreshment and Tranquillity, do plainly suppose a state of Desolation, Driness, Punishment and Anger, to have preceded ; but were it not for these there would be no room for Consolations and such like Divine sweetnesses. Therefore must the Blessed Souls either never enjoy supreme but only ordinary Consolations, or else must they be not lightly but highly disconsolate. The same must be said of the sweetnesses of the Divine Tranquillity or Calm. But if they have not tasted nor felt these extreme Desolations and Miseries in this Life, and yet have died in such a state as shall certainly at last come to infinite Consolations and Refreshments, must it not be concluded they must pass through such a state as will dispose them to desire, feel and receive

Chap.
VI.



8. 2. 19

XXI. A
difficulty,
its an-
swer,
that this
state is
necessary
to the
highest
Delights
of the
next Life.

ceive the Divine sweetneses by experimenting a quite opposite Condition, and which is to serve as a necessary Foundation of the succeeding Delights? Would it not be else absurd and foolish to desire to be supremely comforted without having been ever extremely afflicted? To be quieted and stilled by infinite caresses and tenderesses, without having lain under the sense of God's Wrath and Displeasure? And so of the rest.

XXI. 'Twill be objected, may be, that the Blessed Angels do really enjoy all the delights of Eternity without having passed this desolate Purification to fit them for these Pleasures, not needing it, as having never Sinn'd. I answer, true indeed, The Faithful Angels do enjoy the substance of all the Heavenly Pleasures; but not equally, either in degree or manner. 'Tis true the Angels have Salvation in substance and reality, or rather they enjoy Happiness, Light and Peace, but that delicious and inexplicable mode of sensation which results from the former desolation and present finding rest cannot be in the Angels. They have not this ineffable mode of Joy and Delight which arises from ones feeling ones self saved, after having felt ones self lost. Whence we may see (to make this remark by the by) that it is very true that the Happiness of Men will be greater than the Angels. GOD himself (a wonderful thing this) cannot directly have this sort of joy and sweetness to see himself sav'd after having seen and felt himself lost, to find himself again after having been in the disconsolate sentiment and thought of having lost the supreme Good. Not that we may hence infer there will be something wanting in God; for it is clear this sort of sensation, howsoever sweet it be, cannot under that form belong to a being infinitely perfect, which cannot lose it. Tho' as he is the infinite spring of all sort of Delights, he must have but indirectly and by way of reflection, these sensations we speak of: For loving Men as himself, or as the apple of his Eye, he will out of his great Charity to them rejoice at their finding themselves again after having been lost, as if it had happen'd to himself: The same will the Angels likewise do, tho' in a lower degree: But Man alone will have the direct sensation of this founded in himself, this wonderful sensation,

sensation, I say, above all expression, to feel himself, of lost and damn'd, happy and sav'd ; of dead, alive ; of a Devil, an Angel, nay, a God by participation. See ye not now, that the state of mortifying Desolation, wherein God puts in this Life and after it the Souls he designs to save, is not, as their blindness makes some term it, a cruelty in God, but the highest Mercy, the ground and basis of Sovereign Happiness? That God strikes not but to cure, casts not to Hell, but to lift up to a Throne, kills not cruelly but to bring to a Life the most delightful that God himself can conceive. After all this shall Men dare to Blasphe-
pheme the Things they understand nor. Forgive them, Lord, for they know not what they do.

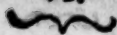
XXII. The nature of the Grace of God and the manner of it's Operation are evident proofs of this. The nature and motions of the Divine Light that is to dissipate our darkness are opposite to the nature and motions of this our darkness : And so when the infinite Light invests the depths of the infinite Darkness that is in us, there must needs be rais'd a terrible and dreadful combat, Light and its Fountain, the omnipotent and infinite God, warring in our interiour against Darkness and its source the Devil ; who like *the strong Man arm'd*, in the Gospel, has hitherto been powerful and strong in the Soul, arm'd and experienc'd against all that is good, and in full possession of this House. And I leave every Man to think, if when two contraries, each strong in its kind, begin to war with all their might in a Soul of a most sensible and passive nature, whether she will not feel, after a strange manner, this war within herself.

Nor are we to fancy the Devil does not assault our Souls nor tempt us to Ill but during this Life. No such matter ; he still attacks them after Death (I speak of such as have not perfectly conquer'd him here) only with this reserve, that he no longer tempts them like an Angel of Light to deceive them, but he assaults them openly like a Devil and a Dragon: And this to the Soul is much more dreadful, which nevertheless is out of danger of being seduced, tho' he strike and pierce her with dismal Afflictions to force her to murmur, be impatient, despair or blaspheme God ; be-
 cause

Chap.
VI.

XXII.
 (10) *The opposition between Grace and Sin, the contest between God and the Devil, Light and Darkness in the Soul, prove the same Truth.*
 Luke 11. 21.

Chap.
VI.



cause God works in such a Soul wholly abandon'd to his divine Light, a resistance against all these darts of the Devil, but withal the Soul is put to horrid torments and dreadful pains. And all this is no more than necessary to purify some Souls. When the darts of the Devil strike them, all the remains of ill that are in them, are immediately smitten, for the Devil has no hold upon the pure and solid good, nor is he so foolish as to lose his time in such attempts; but he presently finds out the corrupt and weak side of the Soul, and here it is he throws his Arrows, here he rages and storms; but as on the other hand the shafts of divine Light are shot against his, they soon beat them back; and so the corruption of the Soul (that was join'd to them) is driven out along with them, as some have been cur'd of irregular and misshapen Limbs, by a stroke of an Enemy that was far from any such design.

XXIII.
That the
Devil has
access
wherever
there is
Sin, even
with re-
gard to
Souls af-
ter Death.

XXIII. We must not think to weaken this Argument, by denying the Devil has any Power to attack after this Life any Soul departed in God's Favour, tho' not in a state of Holiness: For first this denial would be null and groundless. 'Tis certain, the Devil has access every where where there is Sin. Sin being his Element, his Work, and which he has a right to follow where-ever it is. If Sin be reigning, there the Devil is an Emperor; but if it reign not but be weaken'd and oppos'd there the Devil is but a tempter, a defender of his Workmanship, a protector and supporter to the utmost of his Power of all his Works. I remember I have read in the Lives of the Holy Fathers, and elsewhere, of Prayers made to God and Exhortations to Men, that at the time of their Death there might be nothing left in them that belong'd to the Devil, or was under his Jurisdiction, and by which he might have access to the Soul: And * *St. Macrine* (if I remember right) pray'd God to preserve her at the Hour of Death from the fearful and terrible rencounter of the Devils. For indeed every Soul that dies with Sin about her is liable to be assaulted and tormented with their horrible Presence. And the Devils their tormenting Souls in Purgatory are not Stories to be laugh'd at, but are sound Truths, and such as should make Men tremble to think of dying without cleansing themselves from

* *Lives of the Holy Fathers.*
Tom 3d.
by Mr.
d'Andil.

from all their Sins here, which are the only gate by which the Devil has access to every impure Soul, whatever state or place otherwise it be in; were it even in the Paradise of God, thither has the Devil access to it.

Chap.
VI.

XXIV. But had not the Devil that access which indeed he has to Souls after Death, the direct Operation of the divine Light alone in the Soul cannot be conceived or effected but by way of conflict and extreme violence, when it is perfectly to change the Soul, and to take away her most inward spots and darkness. For it is certain the motion or the manner of acting of God's Grace, is contrary to the motions and actions of our darkness and sins, to which Grace will no ways conform or comply with, when it invests and acts upon them. It must always act according to its own rectitude in opposition to the sins and evils that are in us. Tho' there be nothing in the World more simple, sweet, or more agreeing in itself than the bright Grace of God (it being all quiet and uniformity) yet when it meets with any thing contrary to it, the nature and way whereof is opposite to hers, she being inviolable and omnipotent, her motions which in themselves are so agreeable, must necessarily shock the same thing that is opposite to them, and that so constantly and strongly that at last they overcome it by the way of destruction and desolation. A dreadful conflict this, the divine Light warring against the darkness of Sin. They are two powerful Enemies that fight with all their strength, in a place most sensible, for gaining the same place, to see who shall carry it, and wrest it out of the others Hands, and transform it into itself by the strongest attacks possible.

XXIV.
That 'tis
impossible
the Grace
and Light
of God
should
chase a-
way Dark-
ness and
Sin but
by this
painful
Operati-
on.

Surely the Divine Transformation is no inconsiderable matter: you would do well to call to mind the comparison of a statue to be re-cast and set up again, and conclude thence that those who have not in this Life undergone this Operation, must do it in another, if they will, of impure as they are in part, be entirely Transform'd into the state of an Heavenly Purity.

For in fine, if we will be saved, this change must be wrought, and it is impossible to be wrought otherwise than

Chap.
VI.

XXV.
(II.)
Further
Proofs
from the
Reinstat-
ing our
Facultie,
in their
first rest;
vide.

than by the infusion of God's Grace and Light, which will necessarily act upon our filthiness by opposing, fighting and striking them to the quick, and pursuing them into the most secret Recesses of the Soul, where they have sconc'd and lodg'd themselves.

XXV. We need but consider the state sin has brought our Faculties to, and that which they will be restor'd to by the Redeemer, and we shall have new Proofs of the same Truth.

Our Faculties, our Sensibility, Understanding and Love, and the rest, are by Sin cast down from the rank God set them in, and was suited to their natural Constitution. Let us fancy a Man's Body with all its Bones and almost all its Parts Dislocated, and yet the Heart sound, and the Will strong enough to undergo the setting them all right: (for in our case we suppose such Persons in whose Heart Faith and the Divine Grace are still alive, and that they are willing to be resetled in the state God at first made them in) would it not be ridiculous for such a one to think he could go through all the Operations necessary to the setting his Body right again without Pain? All that could be done for him in such a case, would be only to give him some stupifying Medicine to make him less sensible of his Pain, or some strength'ning one to make him Courageously endure the Severity of the Operation. And thus has God to reduce our Faculties into the right situation, that are a thousand times more sensible than the corporeal ones, and more monstrously displac'd and more harden'd in their Dislocation than ever the Members of our Bodies can be; thus, I say, has God of his Goodness permitted that our Souls during this Life should be united to Bodies, and the Elements on purpose to blunt their Sensibility, and extremely deaden their Perception, that the Pains they undergo from the Divine Operation to re-establish them, might be less sharp and sensible; but after this Life, when the Soul is broad awake and in her full vivacity, God does secretly supply her by his Grace with strength to undergo courageously, resolutely and patiently the Operation, though with incomparably more pain than she would have felt in the drousy state of this mortal Life.

If Men were not in a manner excusable through the Darkness and Ignorance they are involuntarily born in, they would be look'd upon as Mad Men for their fantastical Thought, that a Soul of a Nature infinitely sensible, whose Faculties for the most part are broken and perverted, could see her Faculties begirt and torn from their places, bent and turn'd quite another way, and all this without pain and labour! A foolish thought this! which we ought to unlearn in this Life, by the Experience we have of the inward Grief, Trouble, Fear and Confusion, Displeasure and a certain gnawing Fire which we feel within us whenever our Inclinations are cross'd, when our Bents to Ease, Abundance, Honour and our Self-love is never so little oppos'd? What shall we then endure, when all these, and all that depend on them, are to be fully encounter'd by the Omnipotent Light of God, and that in a state when the Soul shall be infinitely more sensible than at present it is.

XXVI. Were there no such thing as this painful Purification, the Grace of God would become an occasion of the Soul's Damnation, and that much deeper than her first, and besides utterly irrecoverable. For were God's Grace and Eternal Life presented to a Soul, whose inmost Fund and Faculties were yet impure, and the Soul receive them in that Disposition, without being purify'd from her Self-love, and her own Inclinations, 'tis visible she would abuse the most pure of God's Graces, as the Devil did, which would make her state desperate. Therefore must she be absolutely and fully purify'd by the Grace of Mortification and Annihilation before she be exalted to the Grace of Enjoyment and Glory, and if that be not done in this Life, it must in the next. For the difference only between these two Lives is not sufficient to break the Chain and Connexion between these Truths and their Consequences. I would gladly know where the impossibility lies, or what absurdity 'tis to say that the Souls of good Men which have many defects still about them, may suffer after this Life upon the score of those Defects, supposing they have not in their Life, time been freed from them? I say, may suffer—that I may the easier have my demand granted when

XXVI.
(12.)
*But for
this dolorous Pu-
rification
God's
Grace
would
prove the
Souls
ruine.*

Chap.
VI.

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I speak only of the possibility of the Thing and not of the Fact. And if so, I ask again whether the Reasons hitherto given with what I shall hereafter give, be not enough to convince us that a thing own'd possible, and true in itself, is pass'd from possibility and Ideal verity to actuality and verity of Existence. If they are not sufficient, there are no Reasons in the World strong enough to prove any thing, since such as are drawn necessarily from the consideration of the Divine Attributes, of Grace, Salvation, the Soul and its Faculties, in a word from the very Nature and Essence of the thing in question, are not thought good.

XXVII.

(13.)
*That ill
Habits
cannot
otherways
be worn
out.*

XXVII. It is well known 'tis the Nature of Habits not to be put off all at once, but by many repeated acts contrary to those that gave them Birth. This plainly requires some time. If therefore a penitent Soul leave this Life before having quite worn off her vicious Habits, it necessarily follows hence, that to strike out the rest, she must for some time yet labour and strive to do it, which is all one with undergoing the painful Purification we contend for.

And let none say, that the Grace of God can and really does do all this in a moment. For this can be no more made out than the thought of the whole Operations being insensible to the Soul can. The Grace of God does not destroy Nature, any more than it forces our liberty, which it would do if such a sudden change were wrought as by Enchantment. For Habits that are acquir'd by acts of the Will and with Man's consent must be done away by the Co-operation of his Free Will. But were Habits chang'd in an instant, this would be necessity and force, nor would the Will at all Co-operate in the effacing of them; therefore would the Will continue still inclin'd habitually to those Habits, to the extirpation of which she did not at all concur as she did to their Birth and strengthening, and to suppose an ill Habit struck out in an instant, is to suppose it is not at all rooted out of the Soul, which is as contradictory as opposite to the Nature of Habits, that are not got and lost but by contrary ways, but by the same Rules, I mean by the Repetition of many acts.

True,

True, the Grace of God is mightier than the Methods of Nature, and I have said somewhere that one stroke of Grace was enough to break an Habit confirm'd by many acts; but this ordinarily is not true, but of sensible Grace, or with regard to the Sensation of it, which is observ'd as arising all on a sudden, and in an instant, in the Person upon whom the Change is made; but this hinders not but that the same Grace might have been present, and also have wrought long before in such an one, though insensibly to the mind, that because it feels not the Sweetness and Brightness, often fancies it has it not, though Grace be in the Soul, and does there secretly Sap the Foundation of an evil Habit.

By just reading what St. *Austin* says of his Conversion in his Confessions, you'd say his ill Habits were done away in a moment, by a Grace that wrought this change in an instant. But 'tis no such thing; this same Grace had begun to work in him long before, by giving him a prospect of his Miseries and Filth, and an abhorrence and aversion to them, with sighs and desires to be delivered from them, by raising in him inward Jars and Troubles, and so had already undermined the Roots of his vicious Habits. But he then being in Ignorance, and a deep Sense of his wickedness, perceiv'd not this Grace, all on a sudden he felt the effects of it by the light and perfect tranquility that broke in upon his Soul, in that very moment the Wall, as I may say, of his vicious Habits fell down, after having been a long time before weakned by constant assaults. And if some go through this Purification sooner than others, they are Heroick Souls that throw themselves up generously and wholly to God's disposal without reserve or any regard to themselves, and yet do they require some time because God will win and have their Liberty, nobly and generously, from acts of Choice, springing truly from themselves, acts sincere, constant and try'd.

XXVIII. This consideration furnishes us with a new Reason for maintaining this Truth, The Reason I

no other way than this, of attaining pure and perf. Habits and plentiful effusions of the Grace of God.

Chap.
VI.

have just given is grounded upon the way of rooting out of ill Habits, and this I am going to give upon the way of acquiring good ones. There are Habits in Grace as well as in Nature, Habits of turning more or less strongly, seldomer or oftener, more or less directly ones Desire, Understanding or Heart towards God, his Attributes, or his Acts, and this in an infinite variety of ways. Now upon the supposition that a Person who has not yet got an Habit of applying his Desire, Understanding and Heart, towards God should chance to die, I don't say in a Habit, but at least in a sincere and resolute act of Love towards God, 'tis certain he would die in a state of Grace and Salvation, but would be far from enjoying it presently, and acquiring these Divine Habits without a great deal of Pains and Labour. For an act only of true Desire of God, which he did exert upon his Death-Bed, and one single glance of his Eye or his Understanding which he cast upon God's bright Majesty, one only act of Resignation of himself and of his all to God, are not sufficient nor immediate preparations for the Enjoyment of everlasting pleasure and light. 'Tis too weak this, or might easily be interrupted, or at least would be too lukewarm and in too remiss a degree to build upon, or to raise our Eternal Salvation upon such Foundations. Were the Vessel of this Soul to be filled with heavenly Delights, but according to the largeness she had acquir'd by this only act, without hooping her more strongly or casting her again to widen and enlarge her, her happiness would be scanty and limited; and yet after all could not be confirm'd in this without suffering first; for a Soul that has yet but one act of Faith, and consequently no Habits but ill ones, cannot receive the continuance of God's Actions upon her (which I suppose to act, and that forever in the Soul) without having her sensibility tormented through the opposition there is between the Divine Grace and her corrupt Habits, which God's Grace must extirpate. And as for receiving Divine Pleasures, her Sense of them cannot be great and infinite, unless the Soul do extremely desire the Light of God, and infinitely hunger and thirst after his Divine Presence; and this is what a Soul formerly either very cool, if
not

not quite cold, as to any such thing, cannot otherwise be brought to do, but by seeing herself depriv'd of the Presence of God, which she begins to desire, and by seeing and feeling herself clos'd round with Darkness, which she begins to abhor and be tormented with, and which before she had no Sense of.

Besides, 'tis impossible for the Soul to acquire a Habit of acquiescing in God purely, and by willing what he wills from a Principle devoid of all Self-love, unless she be reduc'd to such a state of Afflictions wherein there is nothing to gratify or favour her, and yet she rests contented after all, out of a true Principle of Justice and Love to God, without any regard to herself; for any other state would but feed her Self-love, and that the more easily and certainly, by how much the greater the Delights were she felt in such a state. The Soul therefore to acquire a solid bottom to acquiesce in God's Love, purely out of Love to God only, must necessarily be cast into a state of universal Sufferings and Desolations. If therefore she be not in this Life reduc'd to these extremities, and yet leave this World in a salvable State, she must after her Decease go through these Preparations, which are the true Purgatory, and the proximate and immediate qualifications for perfect Blessedness; for there can be no other but these, *viz.* An habitual, firm, and ardent desire of God's Light and Presence, as well as to be deliver'd out of the dark and disconsolate state one is in.

XXIX. For all the Reasons I have hitherto alledged for the Proof of the Truth in question, it appears what answer is to be given to a question formerly propos'd in one of the preceeding Treatises, * *viz.* Whether a Soul oblig'd to these kinds of Pains (which I there call Secondary, Castigatory, Instructive, Purgative, Mortifying, &c.) might not be discharg'd of them by anothers taking them upon him, or by his moving God by his Prayers and Holy Desires to forgive them? I answer first, If we take this Discharge for a total or absolute one of a Person alive or dead (for it is applicable to both states) from all sorts of Pains, such a general and absolute discharge is utterly impossible. And this is clear from all the foregoing Reasons: but if it be meant of a Discharge of part only of

Chap.
VI.

XXIX.
Whether
we can
be dis-
charged
of Pains
of this
kind.
* Econ-
omy of
the Re-
estat. be-
fore the
Incarna-
tion, c.
4. n. 20.

Chap. VI.  such kind of Pains, I say secondly, That the thing is not absolutely impossible ; but neither is such Discharge altogether so advantageous as one may think, for the Salvation of those who are thus reliev'd.

How one Person cannot suffer for the discharge and relief of another.

When one that is a Friend of God presents himself before the Divine Majesty on the behalf of a Soul that has a great deal yet to suffer, either in this or the other World, and instantly begs of God to render the Sufferings of such a Soul less lasting and grievous, and also intreats to undergo them himself in the other's stead ; God, who can deny nothing to the Love and Prayers of his Friends, grants him his Request as far as his Divine Wisdom shews him it may be done ; and the Person or Soul for whom the other interceded, is effectually reliev'd ; and he that pray'd in his behalf is often laden with the same, or equivalent to those the other was to have suffer'd, and which he has desir'd might be transfer'd upon himself. But see what follows. 'Tis this : he that is thus discharg'd from suffering all he should, shall in Proportion be likewise less sensible of the Delights and Refreshments he would have enjoy'd in Eternity, if he had thoroughly undergone all he should ; and on the contrary, he that has pray'd and endured for the Discharge of the other, shall in Eternity enjoy an addition of Divine Pleasures, Delights and Refreshments which the other Person should have had, had he himself suffer'd what the other did for him ; from which Sufferings nevertheless it is good sometimes to be deliver'd in this Life, when the Person is frail, and when there is reason to fear he could not undergo them without endangering his Salvation. But this Deliverance alters not this universal and inviolable Rule, *That the more perfectly any one suffers what he ought to suffer, the more perfectly does he afterwards become sensible of the Joys and refreshments of Heaven, and of the rewards of Eternity ; and on the contrary, the less perfectly and the less fully one endures what he should have endured, so much the less perfectly shall he be affected and comforted with the Divine Delights.*

Wherefore such as aspire courageously to the highest enjoyment of Eternal Happiness do not desire their Temporal Sufferings should be lessened. And for this

Rea-

Reason 'tis that God permits that such as out of Chap. VI.
Charity desire to suffer for others, should really suffer; not that God, to speak properly, discharges any, and transfers their Sufferings upon others; but he remits the Punishment to him that is pray'd for, moved there-to by the Love he bears to another; and desiring to reward the Charity of such a one with Eternal Gifts and Pleasures, he makes him worthy of such Rewards, and capable of such peculiar Sensations and Graces, by means of the Sufferings he sends upon him; and therefore 'tis he lets him suffer what he desir'd to suffer to discharge the other, or rather to relieve and comfort him; for absolutely speaking there can be no entire discharge of any from suffering as long as he is polluted with sin, either in this or the next Life. Of this somewhat more shall be spoken in the Chapter following.

XXX. I might heap up Reasons upon Reasons if I had a mind to heap up all manner of Proofs of the necessity of this painful Purification of imperfect Souls after Death: but I think it needless to propose any more, and therefore this one consideration shall put an end to my Proofs of this Truth.

'Tis the nature of generous and sincere Love to be afflicted, confounded, and to break its Heart when it considers, and when 'tis true too, that it has frequently and inexcusably offended and been prodigiously ungrateful to a Benefactor that has already done him a thousand kindnesses, and designs for him Infinite and Eternal Happiness, to whom yet he has not made due Reparations; and for whom he has not as yet done or suffer'd any thing, nor as yet taken the pains clearly to wipe out of his Soul what is infinitely displeasing to this his adorable Benefactor. A Soul, I say, that begins to love generously, far from pretending immediately to the most intimate Enjoyment of all the Delights and of all the most glorious and most tender Caresses of this adorable Monarch, would die for shame and confusion upon the remembrance of her Ingratitude and unspeakable wickedness; and she has not yet repair'd, as she ought and might, the outrage done to so great a Majesty; this must needs fill her with confusion and inward pangs till she can truly judge according to the Truth of God that she has done and suffer'd enough to repair,

Chap.
VI.

repair, I say not the whole demerit of sin, but at least part of both, what she could and ought to do and suffer in this World, to make her taste the bitterness of sin and repent of it. 'Tis impossible but a Heart of this Temper, that begins to love God purely and generously, should be thus afflicted. 'Till then, 'tis afflicted and abhors herself; the infinite Benefits of Eternal Life, would prove, should God bestow them presently upon her, before she had made him due Satisfaction, would prove, I say, Coals of Fire upon her Head (to use a Scripture Phrase) which would make her redden and burn with shame and heart-breakings inexpressible. The Saints themselves, after having in this Life perfectly pass'd through their Purification, find themselves terribly disquieted with this consideration, that they have not done nor suffered enough, to repair as they ought the dishonour and injury they have done God, in offending him; nor to make themselves worthy the least of his Benefits. And did not God come in to their assistance here, by appropriating to them the Merits of his Son, and imputing to them for Righteousness, or as Satisfaction to his Righteousness, the Faith and Desire they have to satisfy him, nothing would be able to quiet the pure, generous, and just Love they have for him, and for all that concerns his Glory.

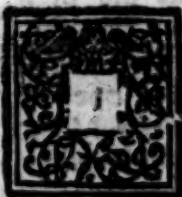
I have by the by put in a word of the Imputation of the Merits of *Jesus Christ*, and of Faith for Righteousness, which it may be you would wish to see a little more clear'd up, and enlarg'd upon; but this is not the place for it, but I shall be sure to do it when I come to treat of Justification. I here end this Chapter, and design the following for the Examination of some Questions and Difficulties which are or may be started against the Doctrine which I think I have clearly demonstrated.

C H A P.

C H A P. VII.

*Six Difficulties touching the Purification
after Death, with their Solution.*

I.



THESE I take to be the chief Difficulties, and that bear hardest upon the foregoing Chapter.

First, 'Tis ask'd if this be not a Doctrine of Despair, rather than of Comfort? For 'twill be said, what Despair will not such a Doctrine as this be apt to inspire, that after Death we must go and suffer such Torments, in comparison whereof all the Pains of this World are almost nothing.

Secondly, If it be not contrary to the Doctrine of the Remission of Sins, and to the Protestation God makes by his Prophet, That when a Sinner forsakes his Iniquities, all his unrighteousness which he has committed shall not be mentioned unto him, he shall live.

Thirdly, If it be not contrary to what the Scripture says, *That the Blood of Jesus cleanses from all sin.*

Fourthly, If it may be demanded whether the Goodness of God cannot pardon sin without punishing? Whether he cannot forgive the Punishment as well as the Guilt? Whether he cannot acquit and dispence with our suffering out of pure Grace, or upon Exchange, or any other way, and if so, Whether 'twould not be cruelty not to do it?

Fifthly, It may be said, That if the Purification of the Soul, such as I have describ'd it, be indispensably necessary, and that it is for that Reason we are to suffer after this Life, incomparably more than we should have done here, how comes it to pass that God does not rather purify all Souls in this World, at least all such as are habitually of Honest and good Hearts.

Sixthly,

I. *The Principal Difficulties and Objections, that are usually made against the Doctrine of the preceding Chapter, and their Solutions.*

Chap.
VII.

Sixthly, 'Twill no doubt be ask'd as a main Objection, why the Scripture speaks so little and so obscurely of so important and capital a Doctrine. In my answers to these Objections you will meet with things worthy your Observation.

II. The
answer to
the first
Objection.
We must
not expect
our
Sins to be
done a-
way with-
Suffering
here or
elsewhere

II. Much might be said upon the first of these demands, which when'tis made by way of Objection, and with great confidence in its strength, shews much blindness, injustice and self-love in those that make use of it. I might retort upon them and say, if they are for Doctrines of Despair let them go to the modern Predestination, which is one if ever there was one in the World, but it is none to say, that the old Man, that Son of Perdition, must expect to be destroy'd, and that that cannot be done without suffering either here or hereafter, the contrary is a false hope that shall Perish.

No, since the commission of Sin there is no hopes of entring into Life, but by the Death of Sin, by sufferings by the strait and thorny way. Have we a mind to hope to suffer nothing in the other World; let us then crucify our selves and dye perfectly in this, otherwise let us absolutely despair of being exempted from sufferings after this Life. This is a just and well grounded despair; let us expect it and consequently prepare to suffer courageously. But yet this is not to despair of God's Grace and of our Salvation. 'Tis meer Ignorance to confound these things, and 'tis the blindness of self-love that makes Men do it; the chief good of self-love is not to suffer; and when 'tis told the contrary then it presently despairs; and yet must this necessarily be either here or elsewhere.

III. The
Saints
painful
Purification
in
this
World,
that of
the less
Holy shall
be as
great in
the next.

III. I know not what Idea Men frame to themselves of the Justice of God, to imagine that dying in great impurity they shall be purified by God after this Life without any pain, when they see that the most Holy and just Friends of God, that have been purified in this Life, have not been so, but by such extreme torments both of Body and Soul, that they must have despair'd under them, without the special assistance of God; let us hear a little some of their complaints, 'twill be worth our while, and will make this Doctrine not look so strange.

Thus

Thus Job,

Chap.
VII.

Job. 6.

O that my Grief were thoroughly weigh'd and my Calamity laid in the balances together, for now it would be heavier than the Sand of the Sea, therefore my Words are swallowed up, for the Arrows of the Almighty are within me, the Poison thereof drinketh up my Spirits, the Terrors of God do set themselves against me, O that I might have my Request, or that God would grant me the thing that I long for! Even that it would please God to destroy me, that he would loose his Hand and cut me off. Thou troublest me with Dreams and scarest me with Visions, so that my Soul chooseth Strangling and Death rather than Life. Why hast thou set me as a mark against thee, so that I am a burden to my self? He breaketh me with a Tempest, and multiplieth my Wounds, he will not suffer me to take my Breath, but filleth me with bitterness. Mine Affliction encreaseth, thou huntest me as a fierce Lion, and again, thou shewest thy self marvellous upon me. Thou renewest thy Witnesses against me and encreasest thine Indignation upon me; changes and war are against me. He hath broken me asunder, he hath also taken me by my Neck, and shaken me to pieces, he poureth out my Gall on the Ground, and sets me up for his mark; his Archers compass me round about, he cleaveth my reins asunder and doth not spare, he breaketh me with breach upon breach, he runneth upon me like a Giant. He hath fenced my way that I cannot pass, and set Darknes in my Paths. He hath stript me of my Glory, and taken the Crown from off my Head. He hath destroy'd me on every side and I am gone, and mine hope hath removed like a Tree. He hath also kindled his Wrath against me, and he counteth me as one of his Enemies. His Troops come together and raise up their way against me, and encamp round about my Tabernacle. They mar my Path, they set forward my Calamity: They came upon me as a wide breaking in of the Waters, in the Desolation, they roll'd themselves upon me. Terrors are turn'd upon me, they pursue my Soul as the Wind, and my welfare passeth away as a Cloud. And now my Soul is poured out within me, the Days of Affliction have taken hold upon me. My

Chap. 7.

Chap. 9.

Chap.
10.Chap.
16.Chap.
19.Chap.
30.

Bones

Chap.
VII.

Bones are pierced in me, in the Night Season, and my Sinews take no rest. He hath cast me into the mire, and I am become like Dust and Ashes. I cry unto thee and thou dost not hear me, I stand up and thou regardest me not. Thou art become cruel unto me, with thy strong Hand thou opposest thy self against me. Thou liftest me up to the Wind, thou causest me to ride upon it, thou dissolvest my Substance. When I looked for good then evil came unto me, and when I waited for Light there came Darkness. My Bowels boild and rested not, the Days of Affliction prevented me. I went Mourning without the Sun. I stood up and cried in the Congregation. I am a Brother to Dragons and a Companion to Owls. My Skin is black upon me, and my Bones are burnt with Heat. My Harp also is tun'd to Mourning, and my Organ unto the Voice of them that Weep.

See David's Complaint.

- Pl. 31.
9, 10. Have Mercy upon me O Lord, for I am in Trouble, mine Eye is consumed with Grief, yea my Soul and my Belly. For my Life is spent with Grief, and my Tears with Sighing, my Strength faileth because of mine Iniquity, and my Bones are consumed. I am cut away from thine Hand. When I kept Silence my Bones waxed old, thro' my roaring all the Day long. For Day and Night thy Hand was heavy upon me, my moisture is turn'd into the drought of Summer. Thou holdest mine Eyes waking, I am so troubled that I cannot Speak. Will the Lord cast off for ever, and will he be favourable no more? Is his Mercy clean gone for ever, doth his Promise fail for evermore? Hath God forgotten to be Gracious, hath he in Anger shut up his tender Mercy? My Soul is full of Trouble, and my Life draweth nigh to Hell, I am counted with them that go down into the Pit, I am as a Man that hath no Strength, free among the Dead, like the slain that lie in the Grave, whom thou remembrest no more, and they are cut off from thy Hand; thou hast laid me in the lowest Pit, in Darkness and in the Deeps: Thy Wrath lieth hard upon me, and thou hast afflicted me with all thy Waves. Lord why castest thou away my Soul, and hidest thy Face from me? I am afflicted and ready to die from my Youth up. While I suffer thy Terrors
- Pl. 32.
v. 3, 4.
77. v. 5.
88. v. 4,
Etc.

I am distracted, thy fierce Wrath goeth over me, thy Terrors have cut me off. Chap. VII.

I shall cite no more, nor was I willing to cite any fewer Passages, to use us to the sight and expectation of Sufferings, in our Purification; since the most Holy Souls have endured so much during theirs.

Now would I fain know, if this Doctrine and these draughts laid before us be a Doctrine and draughts of despair and cruelty, or whether it would not rather be cruelty in God, to treat thus his dearest Friends, such holy and just Persons as *Job* and *David*, to purify them here in this Life from the bias and secret remains of Original Corruption, and yet there shall nothing like this befall old Sinners, that neglected to purify themselves during this Life, because they could put off their Purification to the end of their Days, or 'till after Death, in which state our senses are infinitely more tender and quick than in this? For my part I know not what Name to give such extravagant pretensions, some remains of Sin cannot be taken out of the most Holy Souls in so drowsy a state as this present Life, but by such dreadful Sufferings, as to make them curse the Day they were Born in, with the criminal source of such Pains: And yet shall these that have still lurking in their Hearts Ten Thousand Plagues of Sins. if they happen to die when they are returning to God, yet shall these I say be purified in the midst of Delights, or at least without any sense of pain, in a Life where every thing is infinitely more awaken'd and more sensible. In the Name of God, Readers, make some use of your Understanding here, or at least of common Sense.

IV. But does not this lead to despair? No, it does not, if understood aright. For by the help of God's Grace, we may fully purify our selves here in this Life. When a Man dies before he be thoroughly purified, if he die in a state of Grace, he is much more touch'd with the Love of God, and trust in him, and trouble for having offended him, than with the fear of Suffering. And as for after Death, this painful Purification being wrought, by the infusion of God's Grace, and his Love; God works in such Souls amidst their most desolate Torments, so full an Acquiescence

IV. *The Dolorous Purification after Death is accompanied with a full Acquiescence in God.*

Chap.
VII.



essence to his Divine Justice, that they would not wish it otherwise with them than it is. That unspeakable Torments and a perfect Acquiescence to God's will, are not things incompatible in the same subject is clear from our Saviour's Passion, and the Sufferings and Martyrdoms of Saints; and whoever comprehends that the cause or fire of this Purification is only the great love of God, who strives by an infinitely loving Impression to unite and conform the Soul to his own rectitude and purity, and stamps in the Soul an infinite desire to see herself holy and pure, as God is, and would have her to be, will easily likewise conceive that this state of Love and Grace, will be at once both infinitely full of satisfaction and content, and infinitely painful too. For the infinite Love and desire that God infuses into the Soul, and which the Soul feels for God, make her love and desire above all things, above all sensation or pain whatever, that God's Justice and Will should be accomplish'd: And whereas she sees in herself yet some Obliquities, Repugnant to the most Holy and Heavenly purity of his Divine Majesty, whom she loves and desires above all things, this unlikeness and hindrance of her Union with God, is so great a trouble and anguish to her, that could Hell rid her of it, she could rather choose Hell than see her self thus hindered from uniting with her God, or present herself before him with any impurity about her. As great as is the desire and love such Souls bear to God, so great is the torment they feel for having offended him, and for having still within them some remains of their actual and habitual impurities; and so great also is their Acquiescence in the merciful tho' painful Operation of God's Grace and Love, which offers violence only by accident and on purpose to set them right. For 'tis purely by accident, that the Operations of God in themselves mild, straight and pleasant do, if they light on a subject opposite to them, offend and violently shock it: as to any thing else, this same Operation, this Grace, and the cause that thus afflicts such Souls as are yet impure, is in substance the very same thing the very same Operation that rejoices and fills with delight such as are pure.

The

The same Grace, the same Love of God, and the same manner of acting being display'd upon two faithful Souls, the one pure and the other yet impure, does by the same Action cause in the one infinite Delights, and in the other the Torments of Hell, as to Sense, only from the different Disposition of these two Souls, and not from any difference in the Action as it proceeds from God; and this very same Grace works likewise in these two Souls an infinite Acquiescence, in the one to continue in the Divine Pleasures, in the other to continue as long as it shall seem good to the Divine Justice in the Tortures it undergoes from the Operation of the divine Grace, without desiring to be releas'd, out of a motive of Suffering less, but only to be more closely united to God, her only Love. We think the Mystical Divines Mad, when they say, That a Soul closely united to God would be content and satisfy'd to suffer Hell Torments as long as he pleas'd. This is no Reverie nor Hyperbole, no impossible or contradictory Proposition. 'Tis a Truth which all faithful Souls, that depart without perfect Holiness, do really experiment: After all that has been said, none sure that are not perfectly blind and unteachable can suspect so sound and real a Doctrine as leading any to Despair that sincerely loves God and seeks him heartily.

Let us proceed to the next Difficulty.

V. I have said so much concerning the Pardon and Remission of sin, the exchange, transiation, or discharge of the Punishment of it in the preceeding parts of this Treatise, that I shall content my self at present with the few Remarks following.

I say therefore that this of the painful Purification is not opposite to the Doctrine of Free-Pardon of sin; for notwithstanding all this, it is still most true, that God has pardon'd the capital demerit and principal Punishment due to sin, viz. The Privation of his Grace, his Light, and his Love. God has pass'd by this demerit, and the pardon of this unworthiness agrees very well with the Doctrine I deliver, seeing it is this gracious and free communication of the Di-

V. This
Doctrine
is not
contrary
to the
free Par-
don and
Remission
of sin.

vine

Chap.
VII.

vine Light to the Sinner, that is the Foundation and the acting and purifying Principle in this dolorous cleansing of the Soul; as has been sufficiently shewn.

I say Secondly, this afflicting Purification being but transient and temporal, is no way opposite to the Pardon of Eternal Punishment due to the sinner that would have sinned eternally, had God left him in his Darkness, as he deserves.

* Occo-
nomy be-
fore the
Incar-
nation,

In the third place I say, that to pretend thus to have our sins remitted without all Sufferings, is altogether extravagant, and is urg'd a great deal too far: If God ever gave a full and hearty pardon to any, doubtless it was to his most intimate Friends the Apostles, Prophets, and other Saints. And yet read but the Eleventh to the *Hebrews*, and you'll find that they were to suffer, for all the Free Pardon of their sins. And would sinners, supposing they die in an act of Faith, after a Life spent in Pleasure or Ease, have a full Pardon without suffering at all! * I have shewn elsewhere that Pardon and Chastisement are very consistent, to which I refer my Reader.

Ch. 6. n. 12.

VI. That
Passage in
Ezekiel
not con-
trary to
this
Truth.

VI. That Passage in *Ezekiel* does does not say that simply when a wicked Man turns from his wickedness by an act of Conversion and Faith. he shall presently be free both from Guilt and Punishment. God there speaks of such a Sinner, as had by many Efforts and acts of Violence to himself, endeavour'd to eradicate his vicious Habits, that had mortify'd his old Man, and acquir'd a new Life and vertuous Habits, which is a thing not to be done without great trouble and difficulty. The Passage is this, *The wickedness of the wicked shall not cause him to fall, i. e. (to perish) in the Day that he turneth away from his wickedness. When I say unto the wicked, thou shalt die the Death: if he turn from his Sins and do that which is lawful and right, if he restore the pledge and give again that he had rob'd, walk in the Statutes of Life, without committing iniquity, he shall surely live and not die, and none of his sins that he hath committed shall be mentioned unto him, because he hath done that which is right he shall surely live.*

Ezek. 33,
12, &c.

live. Whence 'tis plain God there speaks of such a wicked Man as had pass'd his Purification in this Life, which is a quite different Person from the Subject of our present question. Besides when 'tis said his sins shall not be mention'd to him any more, 'tis not meant that God will never make him think on them more or that he shall receive no Punishment for them, or that he is not to be cleans'd with Pain and Sufferings; but 'tis meant they shall never be mentioned or imputed to him, to his Eternal Condemnation and Death. This is so clear 'tis needless to say any more on it.

Chap.
VII.

VII. What I have said in the Chapter of Purification concerning the virtue of the Blood and Merits of *Jesus Christ* for the cleansing of Sin, easily removes the third Objection; we need but apply what is there said of their efficacy and working in this Life to the Purification after Death. We must not fancy the virtue of the Blood of the Son of God is limited to this Life. It descends with those Souls that departed this Life in Faith, though not in perfect Holiness. The Grace of God, which *Jesus Christ* by shedding his Blood has merited, and the Divine Virtue thro' which he suffered unto Blood, do encompass these imperfect Souls and compleat in them the work of Purification as is shewn, the way of doing it being in substance the same, whether in this or the other Life: The difference lies only in the degrees of sensibility, which are lower here and more intense hereafter; as also in some other regards, as shall be shewn upon occasion of the Fifth Difficulty.

VII. This Doctrine is not contrary to the purification of sins by the Blood and Sufferings of *Jesus Christ*.

VIII. The fourth is this, whether God cannot remit at least to some the whole Punishment of Sin as well as the Guilt, the Temporal as well as the Eternal. What has been said to the Second, I think may satisfy this Query; but to give full Satisfaction in a matter of as great importance as it is little considered I shall take another way of doing it.

VIII. That sin cannot be taken out of a Soul without a painful Purification.

In the first place, I declare that I dispute not what God by his absolute power can do, who may make things of different natures from what he has made: We must suppose then the nature of things to be as it is, and that God so made it; and then ask whether

Chap.
VII.

*Oeconomy
of Sin,
ch. 13.
n. 16.*

the Nature of things continuing the same, their conduct, variations, habits and perfections, may encrease or decrease otherwise than they do, I mean insensibly and in an instant? This I absolutely deny; and the better to comprehend the Truth of this answer, we must put off this Chymical Prejudice, that God punishes Men positively. For he neither does nor can; he has nothing but Grace to give them, but as this Grace is of a nature, turn, and motion, quite contrary to those of sin, and to the plies of sin, 'tis impossible but it must strongly strike and oppose the Impressions of sin, a War which in a Soul, whose being is Life, is naturally very sensible and afflicting. The operations of Grace do not properly cause Pain, this is the effect of sin awaken'd and set a work, and this stirring up of our corruption and setting it on Foot to drive it out of the Soul, is all that Grace does. When a Medicine drives out the ill Humours or breaks Imposthumes, 'tis none of the Physician that causes the Pains; but the ill Humours only; and a Man must be a Fool before he can accuse of cruelty the Charity of him that designs only his Cure.

IX. *That
the Grace
of De-
lectation
cannot be
given to
take away
the Pain
of this
Purifica-
tion.*

IX. But here lies the main stress of the Question. There are, say they, two sorts of Graces, of Light and Pleasures, may not this latter be given in such abundance as to predomine in our sensibility; so that the effects of the Grace of Light that are afflicting to a Soul yet impure, may be swallow'd up and render'd imperceptible by this Grace of Delectation? And how can it be deny'd that God takes away, Tempers, and Diversifies a thousand ways the sufferings of his Servants, that he diminishes them more or less as he pleases. To all this I have many things to say.

The first is this, That the Grace of Delectation as such purifies none; quite contrary it would encrease our interested and self-love, and would not raise in us any abhorrence of sin.

Secondly, The Grace of Delectation cannot be given without that of Light, and this cannot but be afflicting to a Soul that is not yet pure, this has been sufficiently proved; the other part that the Grace of Delectation cannot be without that of Light is so true, that the delight it self is nothing else but the
result

result of the Divine Light; for when the Motions of the Divine Light strike through the Faculties of the Soul, that are all Life and are at perfect accord with them, the Sense of this Agreement of the Motions of the Divine Light with the living Faculties of the Soul, is what makes the Nature of the Pleasure and Delight; and so deep as the Light has pierced, so high, and no higher does the Pleasure rise. And so the Soul, whose Desires, Life, Sensibilities and Faculties have been dismounted and taken a contrary Bias through sin, and by evil Habits grown stiff in this disharmony, cannot come to enjoy the Grace of Delectation but by the help of such a Light as will torment them so much the more by how much the deeper it shall pierce into their centre. Besides, that such Souls as are to enjoy the most signal and inexpressible Joys of God, must do it without self-love, and adhering to their own Satisfaction, and must also be prepared to this Purity by most lively Sensations of Light, which their Senses shall not relish, that is to say (for there is no such thing as a state of Indolence here) by a Sense of most quick Pains. This Rule has no exception, especially in such Persons wherein self-love has re-sided.

Chap.
VII.

X. Yet is it true that God sometimes gives Sentiments of Joy to Persons that are yet in their sins, and more still to some others that have left off sinning, though their fund and old Habits have not yet passed through the state of Purification. But these Delights are very gross and heavy in comparison of those which flow from the Harmony of the Divine Light, and the Purity of the Soul. And suppose these Joys as great and lasting as you please, for many years it may be, and let them mightily Temper the dolours of Purification, yet after all, God's Justice will have its turn, and his Saints themselves, as pure as they are, or may think themselves, feel the bitterness of their sins without bating them any thing, and often too with Usury.

X. The Delectation on God sometimes affords imperfect Souls, does not stop the course of their Purifying pains.

XI. This is a Rule of God's Justice, that suffers no Justice exactly observes an equality and proportion in the Treatment of Souls in their Purification.

XI. That God's

Chap.
VII.

Exception, that whoever has committed sin, shall taste the bitterness and feel the smart of it ; and that the Sense of the ill we suffer, be proportionable to the ill we have done, greater for greater Crimes, and less for less. God's Justice not suffering the least disproportion herein. But as Persons turning to God are in very different states, some more, some less corrupt, some turning in their Life-time, some just at their Death, and some resigning themselves to God more perfectly than others ; some loving him with more full, noble, and free sort of Love, and others with Affections more weak and less pure : In a word, some are fitter for higher Delights and Felicities than others ; so does God likewise a thousand different ways, all admirable, vary their Purification and Sufferings. By his wise and just Dispensation some suffer less, some more ; some endure nothing but pure Crosses and Sufferings within and without (and these are the shortest and most solid Purifications) the Sufferings of others he qualifies by Graces of inward Delectation, or even by outward comforts, that sweeten and render less sensible the Pains that naturally result from sin. But this sort of Purification is weaker and more lasting, except it be of such as at first resign themselves perfectly and generously to God ; for when God does by fits Temper their Purification with many Favours and Delights, and yet at Intervals leaving them under dreadful Crosses and Aridity ; nay, which is an unheard of wonder, he sometimes gives them Sentiments of such immense pains amidst their greatest Joys, that no Creature could endure them, the sense of which is so season'd or joyn'd with Sentiments of so great Pleasure, that these infinite Pains are infinitely dear to them. This to the Animal Man will look like a contradiction, yet is it nothing but the very Truth. 'Tis very easy to conceive that God may act strongly upon our sensibility, and make such Impressions upon it as shall be too strong for the imperfect state of the Soul (which disproportion will raise in her a painful Sensation) and that at the same time he may work in the Centre of the same Soul so great and deep an Acquiescence, that in the greatest Tortures she may feel a Fund of such Peace and Joy as will not suffer her to De-
fire

fire any thing better. *St. Tereſe*, the ſublime *John of the Croſs*, and above all, the admirable *St. Catherine of Genoa*, have experienced and deſcrib'd theſe wonders. Thoſe that rake Pleaſure at the ſight of a Tragedy, to feel themſelves afflicted and moved, may comprehend, though but very groſſly, that 'tis not ſo impoſſible a thing to mix Pleaſure with Pain; and 'tis much eaſier to apprehend in the main how there may be an exact proportion in what Men undergo to be cleans'd of their ſins, notwithstanding the infinite variety in the Modes of their Purification.

Suppoſe we, for Example, two Perſons exactly in the ſame degree of evil, and the very ſame Diſpoſitions of Soul; their Sufferings though unlike, may be reduc'd to an equality, if the one ſuffering one Year and the other Ten, the ſufferings of the latter be Ten times lighter than thoſe of the former. And if with the equality of their ſins the one gives up himſelf to God with Ten times the Courage and Love of the other, his ſufferings though more grievous in themſelves, will to him be Ten times more tolerable. Laſtly, If this Perſon be Ten times more ſervently pray'd for than the other, or if thoſe that pray for the one be much more beloved of God than thoſe that pray for the other; God in Favour of his Friends will ſupply the one with ſuch Encouragement, Love, Joy and Strength that ſhall ſooner, with more Eaſe and Courage, and by wider ſteps, finiſh the courſe of his painful Purification, than the other ſhall. And thus we ſee notwithstanding the great difference there may be in the Uſuage of two Perſons chargeable with the ſame ſins, yet the Juſtice of God fails not to deal with them according to moſt perfect Rules of equality. Much leſs are we to ſuſpect of Partiality, this Divine Juſtice, by reaſon of the infinite different Treatments all Souls meet with, when it may be there are not two of them exactly equal in degrees of Imperfection, of Good, of Love, of Courage and Reſignation, of Capacity and Conſtitution, nor laſtly equally advantaged by the Prayers of others, as well as many other things both internal and external. Let us therefore ſtick cloſe to the great Rule, *God will render to every Man according to his works*. Thoſe that expect exceptions, do but deceive themſelves.

Chap.

VII.

The Fifth and Sixth Difficulties, and their Solution.

XII. *That it is their own fault that Men undergo not in this Life the passive Purification, that is incomparably lighter here than in the Life to come.*

XII. We are now come to the fifth difficulty. 'Tis demanded, since there is no being Saved but by this way of painful Purification, which is also more tormenting and lasting in another Life than in this, why God instead of settling a Purification after Death has not so order'd things as to have it compleated in this Life, at least for such as are converted here? Which seems the easier to be done too, because this Purification being Passive, depends, to ones thinking, purely upon the will and operation of God. Had I nothing to reply, I might say it was God's part to answer this Objection, but I trust we need not stop short in so fair a way.

God doubtless had rather Men would purify themselves in this Life, but on the other Hand he will not force them; and so most Men Perish because they will not set upon doing God's Will. And of those that do some do it so late, others so imperfectly and slowly, that Death snatches them away before they have made any considerable Progress. To pretend that God ought to lengthen their Lives miraculously until they had gone through their Purification, is both unjust, foolish and useless, nay, and indeed hurtful. For why must God be continually and every where doing Miracles in favour of such as would not take the regular way he set them? Must he in Condescension to their laziness and negligence prolong their Lives to the Day of Judgment? But still suppose he should do so, what would they gain by this but only more time to go backwards, relapse and perish? 'Tis often an act of special Grace to take them away while they are in a good tho' but imperfect state: Because by this they are at least put out of danger of perishing, which they were in all this Life long, and are now out of, whatever transient Sufferings they are there to meet with: And this is one Reason God does not oftener grant this Passive Purification to all that are sincere and of honest Hearts, no nor to all such as wish and beg it in this Life: I am going

ing to set down some other Reasons of God's dealing thus with us.

XIII. Such as are of honest Hearts do most of them by distractions suffer themselves to be taken off from the care they should have of purifying their Souls, and from resigning themselves up in silence and vacuity to the Operations of the Holy Spirit. We spend most of our time and care upon external Objects that present themselves to us, and concern either our Bodies or the Affairs of this World. Men seldom recollect themselves from this fatal employ to look into their Souls, and see how things stand in relation to their Holiness and Righteousness, whether they begin to lay the Foundations of Life, and of the employments of Heaven, and to root out of their Hearts whatever is to have no place there in another Life. And to this fatal mischief of our continual distractions and little reflection upon our selves, there is no other remedy but Death, that removes us from the objects and occasions of our distractions, and restores us to ourselves; and by that means makes us more capable of attending our Purification, and admit the Operation of God in our Souls, true indeed, after a more afflicting manner than here, which yet could not be done whilst we liv'd in this World by reason of our perpetual laziness and distractions.

XIV. Those whose Soul is very active and much addicted to reasoning cannot ordinarily be purified (at least perfectly) in this Life. I suppose them to be Persons of Piety and Wit, and that they employ their Reason and Understanding upon Divine and Spiritual Objects. Now tho' their employment be of it self good, yet it comes far short of that Perfection to which God designs to bring such in this Life as dispose themselves for it: Indeed it is rather repugnant to it: For the activity of our Spirit hinders us from receiving such of God's Operations as are most divine and purifying. *As God's Thoughts are not our Thoughts, nor his ways our ways, but are as distant from them as Heaven is from Earth, as God himself says by his Prophet, 'tis no wonder if such as adhere to and are busied about the one, are strangers to the other.* Add to this, that our best performances in this kind are at

Chap.
VII.

XIII.
The negligence and distraction of Men is the Reason they cannot be perfectly Purified 'till after Death.

XIV,
Such whose Reason is strong and their Soul too active cannot be perfectly purified in this Life.

Isa. 55.
8, 9.

Chap.
VII.

ways mixt with some defects, with some secret adhesion to our selves, and above all with some prejudices, which we take for Divine Truths, which yet are frequently very gross Errors, whose consequences, did not our Piety and honest meaning make us disown and misapprehend them, would be as hurtful to Men's Souls, and contrary to God's Glory, as we are fully persuaded they are profitable: And this persuasion renders such incapable of being purified in this Life, for they do not give themselves liberty so much as to doubt of them or consider them with indifference, much less to take off and clear their Thoughts of them, and so in this cessation of their reasonings and Speculations, aspire after the manifestation of such Truths as are purely divine; with a design to give their assent if it should please God to make discovery, or be content to remain Ignorant, if God be not pleas'd to give any Light into such Points. For 'tis certain we are not always in such a capacity, how capable soever we may think our selves, and how great soever we may fancy our impartiality. We have always a Thousand secret and peculiar adhesions, which we our selves are not aware of: Such at least must certainly be incapable who take their own activity and prejudices for divine and holy Truths. 'Tis probable God should discover to them a Light contrary to their pretended Truths, should he make some efforts upon them to silence the travel of their Mind, they would be alarm'd at the first manifestation of his divine Truth, as against a lye or Blasphemy, and would think it a Stratagem of the Devils to render them lazy, idle, and useless, whenever God should go to put a stop to their busy and active Spirit. And so this would only give them occasion to harden themselves the more against the Operations of God, who because he wills their Salvation, does not purify them of their Errors and activity till another Life.

XV. How

Men are

Purified

from their

Errors in the

Life to come,

by the Instance of St. Austin's Errors about

Predestination.

XV. And 'tis then they may be purified of them without danger of relapsing or obstinately opposing the divine Light: For they by Death falling in-

from their Errors in the Life to come, by the Instance of St. Austin's Errors about Predestination.

to an Element, where the ways of this World and the methods of reasoning here are of no longer use, where the imagination, the tracts and disorder of the Brain and Body, do not besiege (as I may say) do no longer corrupt nor stupify the mind, they are then of necessity taught to cease from their activity; and then the divine Light striking strongly upon them, 'tis easy for them to see and own it, to be convinc'd of their Errors (that are contrary to it) and to forsake them; but not without pain and grief; were it only for vexation that they made themselves incapable to conceive these Truths while they were alive, or for having oppos'd them, or for having taught Errors of very ill consequence, as well against God's Glory, which they then infinitely love, as against the good of their Neighbours, who have and will draw thence occasion of a Thousand disputes, dissensions, hatreds, security, blasphemy, negligence and despair, and even of damnation it self: Such was St. *Augustine's* Error about Predestination, supposing he taught it in the sense the *Jansenists*, *Thomists*, and Reform'd say he did, viz. That God has Predestinated part of fallen Men to an invincible and special Grace, or to eternal Life, and has left the rest to be lost: That he has done this without any regard to their different Behaviour or Lives: That none of those that are thus design'd for Life can finally Perish, or any of the Reprobate be Saved; and such like Opinions, the natural consequences whereof are dreadful, and from whence a great many have drawn a Thousand ills prejudicial to God's Glory, their own Salvation, and the Peace of their Brethren.

XVI. Nor are we to think it improbable that so ho- ly a Man as the great *Augustine* should fall into and continue in an Error of so high a nature even 'till his Death, he, who was so far from the proud pretension to infallibility, as to have Humility enough to write whole Books, wherein he owns and recants all his known Errors, without mentioning such as he could not retract, because he did not yet know they were Errors, such as were in truth his Opinions concerning

Chap.
VII.

XVI.
The bet-
ter to
confute
the dam-
nable
Herefy
of Pela-
gius,
St. Au-
gustine,

unadvisedly engaged himself in the Error of Predestination.

Baptism

Chap.
VII.

Baptism and the state of Infants that died without it, and some other. Now he being an Humble Man and one that loved God and his Neighbour, and had a true resigning Faith, and one that would have quitted his Opinions had he known them to be false, these Errors, I say, could never prejudice his Salvation, nor were they inconsistent either with his Holiness or the Orthodoxy of his Faith. But because his Spirit and Reason were too active (as appears from the prodigious number of Books he wrote) and he push'd on their activity too far, 'twas impossible but his Zeal and the occasion that engag'd him to dispute against *Pelagianism*, should carry him into some excess. And 'twas indeed this that threw him into it. His main business was this, to sink that damnable Doctrine of this Heresiarch, *viz.* That Man's Conversion may be wrought without the inward Grace and immediate Operation of the Holy Ghost: That Man by his Fall is so very little corrupted, that of himself, without God's operating in him immediately by his Holy Spirit, he can work his own Salvation, and other Articles of this Infernal Heresy, that directly ruins the Foundation of Salvation. This great Saint undertook it and confuted it admirably well: But urging still his Adversaries, and pressing them with all sorts of Instances, and attributing all Good to God, and nothing of either enlightening or saving good to Man's Operation, he unadvisedly and without any necessity made a false step into Predestination; where, having no just Idea of Man's Liberty, he proceeded so far as to bound it on God's Decrees, without leaving him free, I do not say, to do or not to do any saving good; but to admit or reject the saving Operations which God presents to every Man without exception. This failure of his, his having no true notion of Man's Liberty, would not let him see that the post he had taken of a particular Predestination was of no Service to him against the capital Heresy of the *Pelagians*, and that he might quit it, and yet stop their Mouths: (as I hope I have hitherto done) But fearing, without any reason, to give them any hold, he seiz'd this place of Predestination, and there scoffing himself to little purpose, defended it as well as he could, without seeing its unservicableness,

or

or foreseeing all it consequences, softning what seemed hardest, and disowning the rest. To all which if you add what has been said concerning the difficulty of getting rid of certain Errors in this Life, we may see that St. *Austin* might very easily have been one of this number. Doubtless if after Death and his perfect Purification he had come back into this World, he would have Written another Book of Retractions, and sham'd those of these Days that follow him in his ill as well as his good; in which they are more inexcusable than he, now the truth and the means to get rid of their Prejudices are more clearly shew'd to them than they were to him.

XVII. A third Reason (for I have touch'd upon two already) why the Purification of some of honest and well-meaning Souls cannot be wrought 'till after Death, tho' they desire it in this Life, is, because they have not Courage nor Resolution enough to go through all the Stages of their Purification, but would turn again to their Sins and Perish: So that 'tis out of meer Love to their Salvation that God puts off their Purification to another Life, and for this Reason sometimes cuts the thread of this. We shall easily comprehend the Truth of this, if we do but represent to our selves, how the Devil when he once perceives that God designs to purify a Soul perfectly, in this Life, gathers all his Hellish Troops and sets them in Battle against such a Soul, and makes on one side a lively Representation of the enmity and rage of Men, the shame, infamy, scoffings, the poverty, indigence, disquiet, pain and trouble of such a course, things which make a terrible Impression on the Soul, when God hides himself and afflicts: On the other side, this Enemy lets the Soul see how by an honest compliance with the Customs of the World, and by quitting that singular, rude, and melancholick way of Life, and but living civil with those that are as good Christians, and pretend to Salvation as well as she, she shall meet with Friends, Comforts and Riches, the esteem and approbation even of the best, in short, she shall live in peace, honour and content, and all this without offending God too. Now there are but very few that have courage and resolution enough to stand fast in so ticklish a post. A double assault this made

Chap.
VII.

XVII.
The weakness of Souls and the crafts and assaults of the Devil is another Reason why the full Purification of some Souls is deferr'd 'till after Death.

Chap. made at the same time, on one side Misery dress'd in
 VII. its most frightful appearances, on the other Pleasure,
 which presents herself if we please to our embraces,
 instead of Afflictions which may immediately be avoid-
 ed, if we but yield to the Temptation. As therefore
 few are able to hold out in so dangerous a Station,
 God in Love does not place there such good Men as he
 knows too weak to keep their ground; but removes
 them to another Life, where indeed they will endure
 more, but then 'tis without danger of being overcome:
 For tho' the Devil may attack them there with as great
 or greater fury than before, yet has he not all those
 weapons nor advantages there, as he had here: He
 cannot now threaten them with the disfavour of Men,
 their Sufferings, with infamy nor want, which are his
 strongest Weapons. Nor can he any longer set before
 them, Pleasures, Honours, or Riches, nor can he disturb
 their Sense, Fancy, or Reason; nor make good appear
 ill, nor ill good; nor true false, nor lies truth. The
 divine Light is then so lively and strong that it scat-
 ters all these mists; and the Soul cannot now get rid
 of her trouble by closing with something more Plea-
 sant. So that having departed this Life with a Reso-
 lution, only to adhere to God, and clearly perceiving
 that the state she is in is the will of God, and reduc'd
 to the necessity of continuing in it depriv'd of all ob-
 jects of Temptation, and all sensible commerce with
 them, and even of their very ground of being Plea-
 sant to her, and assaulted only by an open Enemy,
 all whose Artifices she knows, and for whom she has
 an extreme abhorrence, we need not wonder if in this
 state she securely carries on and finishes her Purifica-
 tion. And tho' some have not the Sense of this Assu-
 rance yet is their state indeed and in God's Eyes both
 sure and safe.

XVIII.

*The weak-
 ness of
 our Na-
 ture is
 likewise
 a cause
 of the delay of our Purification.*

XVIII. A fourth Reason of this deferring the Pu-
 rification of some, is the weakness of our Nature, or
 of the thread of our Corporeal Life, that cannot endure
 so rough a proof: And that makes God not so or-
 dinarily grant this favour but just as our infirmity will
 bear. 'Tis well known that the violence of any of our

Passions,

Passions; tho' meerly natural, has cost many their Lives; an extream affliction, pain, sorrow, or joy, has often done it, as is frequently to be met with in History. But such emotions of the Soul as are Supernatural, except in very stout and heroick Souls, would constantly do so when ever they were strong and intense. God is forc'd then even in the most couragious Souls to preserve their Life by a kind of Miracle; which he is not always oblig'd to do, and the Operation thereof a weak and ordinary Soul is no more able to endure than it is that of its perfect Purification.

Chap.
VII.

XIX. 'Twould be tedious to recite all the Reasons of this procedure; but 'tis also not necessary. 'Tis enough to tell you that nothing in all Corporeal Nature is so frightful, ugly, monstrous and tormenting, no terrors, deformities, horrors of all the Devils together, no nor the terriblest Storms of God Almighty are so dreadful as Sin, as a lively view and quick sense of Sin, as it is in its inmost Nature and Essence. Sin is worse than all I have yet named; 'tis the full source and quintessence, as I may say, of all these disorders; of all the abominations, deformities and monstrosities imaginable; and whatever is most frightful and terrible is but a rivulet flowing from this cursed Fountain. In a word, Sin is that supream Evil. And so, when God discovers it, and his divine Light and Grace stir and put in action and rage all these monsters by the violence he offers them, when he is driving them out, no Soul can endure the sight and sense of them without dying of the Pain and Fright. We need but look upon *Job's* Lamentations and Descriptions, and we shall see there that I speak without Hyperbole, and that it is severely true, that one should die a Thousand Times did not God miraculously preserve our Lives under this Operation as he did this Holy Man's. And 'tis because no Man living can all at once sustain the clear view of this bottomless abyss of the Corruption of his own Heart; (a sight which makes the Hell of the Wicked after Death) none, I say, in this Life being able to bear a full and sudden sight of this, no more than he can the full stroke of the divine Light breaking in upon these abominations, and terribly disordering them; for this cause I say, God lets Men of honest

XIX.

How
dreadful
and in-
tolerable
the sight
of Sin is
by the
Light of
God.

Chap.
VII.

honest Intentions discover their sins and Miseries, only little and little ; and lets them not feel but by intervals, and parts the Operations of the purifying Light, which afflicts and affrights them proportionably as these Operations follow closer one upon another ; so as sometimes to take away the Life of a Person under Cure, when the discovery is made any thing fully. A late Instance of this we have in *Matthew Weyer*, that remarkable Friend of God, who lost his Life by these inward Terrours and Pains, when he was in the last course, and as it were on the last step of his compleat Purification. And this is another Reason why Souls of sincere Intentions do not perfect their Purification in this World, though they desire it. God in his Wisdom knows many more.

XX. The last difficulty, why this Doctrine is not clearly set down in the Scriptures.

XX. I come now to the Sixth and last Difficulty, which it may be to some will be the most considerable of all. What is commonly said is much to this purpose. If this Doctrine of the Purification of the Soul after Death were true, how comes it to pass that God has not warned us of it in the Holy Scriptures? For if it be true, 'tis certainly of Importance enough to be told us, seeing it may be of incomparable use to restrain Men from sinning, and to keep them in awe of God's Justice and Judgments; and these Dispositions are a very good step towards Conversion and Eternal Life.

XXI. What knowledge essential and necessary to Salvation. Of the knowledge of God's Justice.

XXI. My Answer to this Objection is this.

There are very few things necessary to be known in order to Mans Salvation ; they may all be reduc'd to these, the knowledge of a God, powerful, good, just and true in himself and works ; to know ourselves to be impotent, wicked, unjust and deceitful ; and lastly to resign up ourselves with all our Hearts and Minds to God, to work in us as it shall please him, according to his Power, Goodness, Justice and Truth. But the particular knowledge of the manner how these things are, and how they work, is not absolutely necessary to Salvation. 'Tis, for Example, very necessary for me to know that God is good, but to know what this Goodness of his properly is, when, how, and how far, after what manner, and by what kind of Acts it operates and displays itself in the Creatures, all this, doubtless, is not necessary to Salvation. As to all these particulars I may safely rest satisfy'd with a Divine Imphi-

Implicite Faith, and with 'this general consideration, that God is infinite, and therefore infinitely Good, and wants no sort of Goodness. 'Tis the same with his Power and Truth. 'Tis not necessary that I know the extent of the one, nor of its Objects and Modes of exerting itself; nor indeed is it possible I should in this World; no more is it necessary that I should know all the Truths in God, nor all those that issu'd from him in the Creation and Redemption of Nature; so likewise, to know the substantial of his Justice, 'tis sufficient to know he is so just, and has so justly disposed of the Constitution and State of our Souls, that nothing shall befall any but according to their own Choice and Doings. This is but just. 'Tis likewise very just that he who does ill, or sides and closes with it, should have such Sensations, as are suitable to the State he is in; or that his Sensibility should be in disorder, and in a contrary State to what God put it in at first. 'Tis just God should not communicate his Light to such as are in darkness without shocking and disturbing their darkness; and indeed 'tis impossible it should be otherwise. But to know determinately the manner, the time, duration and all the particulars of the Effects and Operations of this Divine Justice, this is not a thing of absolute Necessity. An implicite Faith, and the general Notion of God's Justice is sufficient here, that exacts a strict proportion of painful Sensations and Indispositions in the Soul, according as her Disorders and Sins have been great, habitual, or repeated. And all this is true, notwithstanding the Truth also of *Christ's* Merits and Grace, which, as has been shewn at large, are so far from excusing us from suffering, that they engage us in Sufferings as well as Co-operate with us under them.

XXII. Now these Notices of the Divine Justice are stamp'd upon the Hearts of all Men as a Divine and Unviolable Scripture. And from them it naturally follows, that if any Soul that shall be united to God, has not yet had such Sensations of her Sins as she ought, that she shall certainly have them hereafter, particularly when the Impressions of the Divine Light and

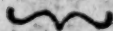
vine in Question, nor is it necessary - he should set down all
quences: and applications of it.

Chap.
VII.

XXII.
That God
has in
Scripture
revealed
the Prin-
ciples of
the Doctr-
the conse-

Grace

Chap.
VII.



Grace begin most forcibly to act upon her irregularities, to oppose and set them right. This is the natural and necessary consequence of these unquestionable Principles. The same consequence follows from many other Principles, above mentioned, and naturally graven in the Hearts of all Men. Let us suppose now what is really true, That Men have obscur'd and forgotten these Notions of the Divine Justice; must God reveal anew to them both the Principles and all the Consequences, and the manner of his dealing according to these Consequences, with all the Souls that live either in this or t'other World? 'Tis enough, doubtless, for God to reveal the Principles, without deducing all their Consequences, much less the particular Modes how he applies them to all the different states of Souls. And this is what God hath done. He has in the Divine Scripture reveal'd the knowledge of his Justice, Holiness and Truth, and the plain and necessary Principles of the Doctrine before us, which in effect is only a consequence of these Principles, and such an one as is not necessary to be known in all its particulars by every one; and this the rather, because 'twas easy for such as might receive Benefit from them, to deduce them from their Principles, provided they could set about it without Prejudice, and proceed in it according to right Reason.

XXIII.
Men
might,
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really
have
drawn
these con-
sequences
from
them.

XXIII. And this is no more than what Men have done from the very beginning, *Hebrews, Greeks, Romans*, and the very Barbarians themselves. They all proceed so far as to acknowledge this for a Truth, That all such as have left this World in a state wherein were still some remains of Imperfections and Sins, were purify'd in and by the privation of the Enjoyment of God for sometime. And since this was a receiv'd Truth, what necessity was there of directly teaching them by the Holy Scriptures such conclusions as they were not ignorant of, and what need of revealing and inculcating there in formal and express Terms, a known consequence, and which naturally follows from Principles laid down almost in every Page? For the very same Reason it is also, that the same Holy Scripture does no where and in direct and express Terms say, that the Soul of Man is immortal, and shall never cease to be, though

though this be an important and fundamental Article, and some may have doubted the Truth of it, and some flatly deny'd it, as the *Sadducees* we see did, who might also have complain'd of the Scriptures not being clear in a Point of such Importance.

Chap.
VII.

XXIV. Yet does not this hinder, but it may still be true, that there are Proofs of the Immortality of the Soul, not in Nature only, but in the Scripture too, from consequences drawn from many Truths and Principles here and there laid down, as when it speaks of Eternal Rewards and Punishments, &c. So likewise the Doctrine touching the dolorous Purification of the Soul after Death, besides its natural Proofs is plainly enough contain'd in many Principles and Passages in Scripture, whence, by way of consequence, this Truth is drawn; as are such Places where 'tis said, that God is just, that he will render to every one according to his Works; that he will bring into Judgment all that Men have done, whether it be good or whether it be evil; that he will render affliction to every Soul that does evil without distinction of *Jew* or *Greek*; that without perfect Holiness none shall see God, and that for this Reason we must have our Hearts pure, with many more like Passages. How many things are held for Articles of Faith, or for chief and necessary Points in Religion, that follow not from Scripture, either so naturally or so strongly as this?

XXIV.
How this
Doctrine
is con-
tain'd in
the Scrip-
tures.

XXV. 'Tis true, as 'twas easy for God to foresee there would a time come when Men would sufficiently consult neither Nature nor Scripture, to find out such sort of Consequences, but rather as were contrary and dangerous; so was it as easy for him to reveal more expressly and directly in Scripture, such Truths as these, and seeing they are of such Importance, 'tis ask'd, Why they are not so Reveal'd?

XXV.
Why
God has
not more
clearly
and pre-
cisely
revealed

this Doctrine in the Holy Scripture.

(1.) To this I Answer first, That they are not of such necessary Importance for all sorts of Persons; for such as are of flexible Tempers, and pliant to the Will of God, such as obey *Veritas amore*, out of a Principle

(1.) Reason is on the Account of the good.

Chap.
VII.

(2.) On
the Ac-
count of
the bad
and sloth-
ful.

ciple of pure Love, more than *Formidine*, and like Slaves, have no need of it.

(2.) Secondly, Such as have still a Kindness and Love to their Failings and the Pleasures of this Life, and consequently seek all Pretences imaginable not to break with them wholly, and without Reserve, such may make an ill use of this so clear a Declaration; might take occasion hence not to endeavour their Purification in this Life, thinking they might be dispens'd with from doing it, and might defer it till after death, without running any hazard of their Salvation, spending their days in Pleasure here, rather than troubling themselves so much about Eternity. And this has really been the case of many, and I do not mean of wicked only, but of some good Souls, which is more to be wondred at. For as for those that delight in Sin, and yet flatter themselves, and would have others do so too, that they may be saved, the case is too plain. The Author of the Provincial Letters, furnishes us with one Example of this kind, from a Passage out of *Escobar*, that begins thus; * *But if the Penitent, says he, will put off his doing Penance to another World, and in Purgatory suffer all the pains he deserves, then the Casuist whom he cites, thought this was no bad expedient.*

* Provin-
cial Let-
ter 10.

'Tis not therefore convenient neither for such of the good as are remiss and negligent, nor for the wicked that seek out pretences to continue in their Sins without repenting of them, to know determinately that there is still after this Life, a time wherein we may be cleanted of those Sins which we were not in this Life purify'd from.

XXVI.
How God
proposes
some
truths
that to
some
are not
necessary,
to others
are hurt-
ful and
probable

XXVI. Notwithstanding this, as there be many who might have made, and who certainly do make a good use of these Truths, it seems God in his Goodness should not refuse them the Revelation of them in the Holy Scripture, especially if it might be so made, that such of the good that needed it not, should not take much notice of it, and the wicked that would abuse it, might not understand it, and might be own'd and understood only by those that would make a good use of it; that is to say, *It would have been well if God*

had

had taught this Truth in such words as some should understand and some not; as he has done in regard of many other things; and 'twas expressly for such things, that he made use of the way of teaching by Parables, which our Saviour likewise used, often proposing in Parables many things the People understood not, and which he more particularly explain'd to his Disciples, either by his Discourse, or by his Holy Spirit, who instructs those whom he illuminates in the true meaning of the Parables, and of the rest of the Scripture.

Chap.
VII.

XXVII. In this view I stick not to affirm, That God has thus taught the Truth in question, that of the painful Purification of the Soul after Death. 'Twill be expected, may be, I should not only bring the common Passages usually produc'd upon this subject, viz. *Mat. 5. v. 25. Mark 9. 49. 1 Cor. 3. 12, 13, 14, 15 Verses,* and explain them, and Answer those that say they are nothing at all to the matter in hand, but also make good my Assertion, viz. That this Doctrine is contain'd in so many places of both Testaments as to make a very considerable number. But because 'tis probable those that expect this of me, are ready to cavil upon such places, and so scoff at what they are not able of comprehending rightly, I will save their Malice and Blindness the trouble of the Diversion of making themselves more guilty than they are already. I will not therefore insist upon, nor dispute upon these or any other Texts; because they are either Parables or Similitudes, or Metaphorical Modes of Speech. In a word, Things and Expressions delivered according to God's design, in such a manner as not to be understood by some sort of Men, but only by such as are likely to make a good use of them, according to the Principle I just now noted, it ought to satisfy both me and others, that we have plainly seen the Truths I have propos'd, do not only very well agree with the Justice, Sanctity, Truth, Goodness and Grace of God, and with his way of working in our Souls; but likewise that the Nature of our Souls, of their Constitution, Faculties and Habits cannot be otherwise either govern'd or chang'd; nor need I tell those that so eagerly demand Proofs from Revelation, that in Truth God has revealed ex-

XXVII.
God has
in the
Scriptures
and in
the writings
of
the Saints
delivered
in that
manner
the Do-
ctrine in
question.

Chap.
VII.



pressly this Truth to some holy Persons that had communion with him, some of whom I have had the happiness to be acquainted with, and to read the Writings of other of them, I mean the Mystical Divines I have sometimes mentioned, who writing when they were pierced with the Flames and Light of Divine Love, all unanimously agree in this Doctrine.

XXVIII.

*How we
are to
carry
ourselves
with re-
spect to
such
Truths as
these.
Their use*

XXVIII. Let every one now make what use he thinks fit of this. Those that may be benefited by this Doctrine will do well to receive what Profit they can by it. Those that think they can well enough be without it may even let it alone for what it is; and not expose themselves to the danger of mocking God by despising his Divine Mysteries which they cannot understand. But for any to fancy that after having liv'd many years in Sin and Imperfections he shall immediately be admitted to the enjoyment of Eternal Happiness, if he does but at his Death shew some acts of Conversion, as sincere as you please, but without any further Suffering, is such a Doctrine as will prove both pernicious and treacherous to all that trust to it. How many at Death will find themselves horribly deceived? And how strangely surprized will such be, who instead of being the next moment, as they expected, in eternal Delights, shall see themselves either suddenly cast into Hell, or else struck through with a quick and tormenting Ray, that will stir up their darkness and impurities, and these Eclipse all sight and sense of God, and leave them to think themselves in Hell; the just Punishment this of their incredulity for having constantly believ'd no middle state between the Enjoyment of Salvation and Damnation; and for having obstinately scoff'd at this great Truth of the Purification after Death. For be assur'd, all ye Scoffers, that the Divine Light will one day strike upon your darkness, and that strongly too, piercing to the very bottom of your Souls, and will there in a most sensible manner struggle with and assault it, either in this Life or in the next, to range you on the side either of Life or Death eternal. Take your course now and sin if you please upon credit, and trust to them that make you believe all this shall be forgiven you upon the account of the Sufferings and Merits of *Jesus Christ.*

Christ. These flatteries which will then be cursed by all, will satisfy for none: Nor will God let pass unpunished, so much as one ill word for all the pretty Fancies in the World, and that by Fire, *Mat. 5. v. 22.* no not one idle Word, *Mat. 12. v. 36.*

Chap.
VII.

O Divine Justice! how exact and incorruptible art thou! and oh poor poor mortals how blind are you to know it, or wicked to hate it! but to what purpose is it to insist any longer on a point so little pleasing to our delicate ones; for after all, 'tis to be fear'd (not to say any thing of the Practice) the common Prejudices will be too strong to let them so much as be persuaded of this Truth, meerly in the Theory. Would it not be better to entertain them with some diverting Subject, after having kept them so long on this melancholy one? This is but just, and I'll e'en do it for once to satisfy them; but to do it the better, I'll borrow or Paraphrase the words of the wisest of Men.

A Paraphrase on the 9th Verse of the 11th Chapter of Ecclesiastes.

Verse 9.

Rejoice, O young Man, in thy Youth, and let thy heart cheer thee in the days of thy Youth, and walk in the ways of thy Heart, and in the sight of thine Eyes, &c.

Paraphrase.

"Hear ye, young People, Rejoice and be Merry
"while you may, take what Diversions your Heart
"can desire, and deny your selves nothing that's
"charming and sweet. But you'd do well to take
"this caution along with you, Know that for all these
"things God will bring you into Judgment.

Chap.
VII.

*A Paraphrase on the 1st, and part of the 13th
and 14th Verses of the 12th Chapter of
Ecclesiastes.*

Verse 1.

*Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy Youth,
while the evil days come not, nor the years draw nigh,
when thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in them, &c.*

Paraphrase.

“ Were it not for this you need not trouble your
“ selves, but put far from your Thoughts all care and
“ vexation, for Youth, the time for sport, will not
“ last always. But rather, O ye Fools, had not you
“ better accustom your selves to think on your
“ Creator in the days of your Youth, while you may
“ do it with ease and pleasure, and not put it off till
“ you are forc’d to do it with trouble, amazement and
“ horrible Pains, when all your worldly ways of think-
“ ing, feeling, and acting, and all the Objects that
“ you were so much taken up with here, and to which
“ your Heart was so firmly united, your Joys and De-
“ sires, and Acquaintances shall be no more, but shall
“ vanish for ever into filth and nothing, and shall leave
“ you naked before the Bright, Omnipotent and pure
“ Light of the inflexible Justice of God,

Part of Verse 13, and Verse 14.

*Fear God, and keep his Commandments, for this is the
whole Duty of Man. For God shall bring every work in-
to Judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good,
or whether it be evil.*

Paraphrase.

“ Fear, fear, I say, so just a God, and keep his
“ Commandments, that you may find grace in his
“ sight. This is all that Men have properly to do in
“ this Life ; for God will make them all appear before
“ his dreadful Tribunal, where all their Actions and
Thoughts

“ Thoughts shall be try'd, with every secret Thing,
 “ whether it be good or whether it be evil, nothing
 “ so sure. Amen. Chap.
VII.

Happy are those that have undergone this Judgment so far in this Life, as to have but little to reckon for in the next. But far more happy yet are they, who having perfectly suffer'd here, shall have no other sense of the Flames of Divine Justice, than if they were the Flames of Love, all whose motions shall perfectly accord with the rectitude of their thoroughly purify'd Souls. Had I any thing particular to ask of God in this Life, it should be certainly this, that thou wouldst be pleas'd, O my Creator, to grant me the Grace to perfect my Purification here, to discover to me by thy Divine Light, the infinite abyss of the Corruption of my Heart, and to give me such quick and lively Sensations of my Condition as may beget in me a perfect hatred of my self; and then give me strength and courage to undergo the Operations of this just and charitable Light, 'till all iniquity and obliquity were driven out, and banish'd my Heart; and there were nothing in me to displease thy Divine Eyes.

Take away, O Lord, all Iniquity, and give good in its place; so will we render thee, the Sacrifice of our Lips, in Praises that shall never end! Amen.

Hosea
14. 2.

P 4 C H A P.

C H A P. VIII.

Of JUSTIFICATION.

I. That I. Justification is wrought either in this Life or after it. But we shall here treat of it without considering these circumstances.



JUSTIFICATION being compleated, then follows Justification, either in or after this Life. And of as great importance as it is, yet the mistakes about it are as great. Nor can I better treat of it than by not at all regarding what is said of it by the Schoolmen, who, tho' Ignorant of the ways of the Spirit, will yet needs be giving their decisions about them, because they can read and pronounce the Letter that killeth. I shall presently be ask'd, (nor is this the only difficulty will be laid in my way) why, as it seems I do, should I go to put off the Justification of some Souls 'till after Death, and it may be too 'till a very long while after Death. My answer is, because it is true. But how you will say, is it not on the contrary an unquestionable Truth, and almost a common Notion, that whoever dies without being justified and absolved of his Sins, is damn'd and lost to all Eternity; and is not this what is confess'd by all Christians? I answer, without troubling my self whether this be their Confession or no, that this pretended unquestionable Truth is False, and that they only die in a state of Damnation, that die out of the way that leads to Justification; and not they who being in this way nevertheless have not as yet arrived at the Goal, nor attain'd to the enjoyment of the Justification they are in pursuit of.

The Conceits Men have of this Matter being so very odd, and the word Justification signifying different Things, as 'tis used by different Persons that treat of it, I shall endeavour to clear up this Confusion; and to distract the Mind as little as possible, which the consideration of many Things foreign to the purpose would certainly do, I shall not consider Justification with

with any special regard either to this Life or the next. My business shall be to lay down some general Truths concerning it which you may apply to such time and circumstances as you think fit, but especially to the time present, where there is no intimation to the contrary.

Chap.
VIII.

II. Before we speak of the word, we will lay down the substance of the thing, in the natural order and coherence it has with what we have been hitherto discoursing. For by this means we shall the better understand their Connexion with what went before. In short then, the Sum of what has been said is this.

II. The
substance
of Purifi-
cation.

God created Man to reign in him by Grace and Love, or by the Light of his Word, and by the Love of his Spirit.

Man Sins and makes himself unworthy of God.

Jesus Christ interceeds.

God in favour to him pardons Man's Guilt, and presents to him anew, inwardly and outwardly, in sundry manners, his Light and his Love.

Man corresponds by the Faith of Resignation.

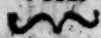
God Works in him by his Light and by his Love, the Separation of the clean from the unclean, and the perfect Purification.

And so far we are come. Go we then on.

When the divine Light (which is, as has been often said, God himself) has driven the Souls darkness out of it, has undone or broken all its evil habits, has abolish'd Sin in the most inward propensions and recesses of the Heart; the first Thing it does next in the Soul, is to shine in it purely and without Clouds: And this is *Illumination* properly so call'd, and follows upon Purification. This Illumination manifesting to the Soul the bottom of its state, lets it see that there is now nothing in it that is displeasing to God, or condemnable; but that all therein is adjusted and rectified, and that it is the Friend of God, who now being seated on the Throne of her Heart, declares to her, that he is perfectly reconcil'd to her, that he is her King, her Father, her Friend and Spouse, and that she is his Daughter and Bride.

It

Chap.
VIII.



It is this Operation of God in the Soul, this Declaration which his divine Light makes to her, *that there is no longer any thing in the Soul that is displeasing to God, and that is not just and right*, which is the true Justification taken in its most strict sense, for the immediate disposition to a capacity of eternal Life, and the immediate source of the sense of the full and perfect Peace which we have with God: And this Justification is exactly and accurately expressed by the Holy Spirit in these Words, which he addresses to the Soul in the

Cant. 4. *Canticles, Thou art all fair my Love, and there is no spot in Thee.*

Before this Declaration, we have Reason to say with St. Paul, how purified soever we may think our selves; *Tho' I know nothing by my self, yet am I not therefore justified*: After it, we go on with him, *He that justifies me is the Lord*. We may safely abide by his Sentence and Declaration, and trust to it, for he does not lie, as the false and deceitful Heart of Man does.

III.
What follows after this.

III. Were it not needful to stay a little upon this Subject, whereon Men have a Thousand Prejudices, which I could wish it were in my Power to remove out of the mind of well-meaning Persons, I should presently have done, having given you the substance of what remains of the mutual Operations of God and Man. I should soon have shew'd, that after this justifying Declaration, that by which God assures the Soul of his paternal Love, and that she is his Child, is that which is called Adoption: And that the Holy Spirit who begins to reside in the Soul with full power, making the righteousness and rectitude which he has wrought therein, pass from actual into habitual, confirming and encreasing more and more her uprightness, Faith and her other Vertues; this goes under the Name of another kind of Justification, whereof God says, *He that is just, let him be yet more justified*; and that the Spirit rules, giving then to the Soul a new form and new ways of thinking and acting, is the Regeneration: That the result of this are the fruits of the Holy Spirit, that God's Spirit does after this expose his new work to a glorious and last trial, which, upon the Soul's continuing stedfast and unmoveable in her Fidelity, is follow'd

Chap.
VIII.

low'd by Glorification: But not holding out, falls in-
to that sort of Sin against the Holy Ghost which is
most peculiarly such, and of the most incurable, tho'
there be no absolute impossibility of recovering out of
it. But I must leave the more minute deduction of
these Heads, 'till I have said what I think may be of
Service toward the removing the difficulties that may be
rais'd about Justification.

IV. If this word were taken in the Scriptures, and
so likewise amongst the Men of our Times, only in
that special sense wherein I at present take it, for an
immediate Disposition to the right and capacity of eter-
nal Life, and for the immediate Fountain of the sense and
assurance of the Peace of God, there would need no
more than what has already in short been said of it,
for as little as it is, it is the explication of the sub-
stance of the matter even to its very ground. But the
Scriptures as well as Men speak sometimes of *to justify*
and to be justified in a larger sense; and these last,
I mean Men, conclude in it, a Thousand things that
are both hurtful and false in the notion they frame of
Justification. And this is what I shall try to clear.

The Scripture sometimes uses the Word *to justify*,
and its derivatives, with respect sometimes to one, then
to another of the Operations of the whole process of
God towards Man, from that of the Pardon of his
guilt, even to that of his compleat Justification: And
so, sometimes when it says that God justifies one,
this signifies, that he works in him something
that is necessary to Justification, or that he leads
him through the way that terminates in perfect Ju-
stification.

Men, as they are of different Parties, give or not
give to this word so large a Signification; but they
almost all come at last to this, to insist upon Justifi-
cation as it denotes the Declaration which God makes
to a Soul, that it is Righteous: And here it is they
fall a disputing. To explain how this is done, and
what ought to be the state of a justifiable Soul, as I may
say; and from the ambiguity of Words, and their own
Darkness, the generality of these Disputers upon this Sub-
ject make a shift to form out a Thousand odd Conceits
as dangerous, as they are pleasing and flattering.

V. To

V. Divers things to be consider'd in Justification. Several sorts of Justifications.

V. To get out of this mist, we are to take notice, that the term, *to justify*, with the rest that come from it, have relation to that of *to accuse*; and as that of accusing supposes guilt, or something faulty; so that of justifying imports *rectitude*, something *fitting*, and right; lastly, when any one is accused of guilt or something unbecoming, there must be *ground* for such a charge; so, when we justify a Man by the Declaration of rectitude which we ascribe to him, there must be a *ground* for it.

Let us now apply this to all that passes in the process of Man's Salvation from his Sin to his Glorification. Therein we shall find four or five sorts or periods, or acts of Justification, or what you please to call them.

VI. First sort of Accusation and Justification and things therein to be consider'd.

VI. First, After Man's Sin, the Devil or some one or other, (for 'tis little matter who) his own Conscience, or may be God, draws up this Indictment against Man: *This Man does not deserve that God should any more offer to him his Light and his Happiness*: The ground of this accusation is, *because he has voluntarily forsaken God*: And as to his Posterity, *it is not fit the effect should have more than its cause*.

This accusation was the first, and most directly opposite to Man's Salvation; and while it stood, Salvation was impossible. To remove this out of the way, it is necessary that God say, "I declare, that although Man be in himself unworthy that I should offer him my Grace, yet I do not reckon him unworthy of it. The Fundamental Reason is. Because my well-beloved Son has mediated in his behalf, and has earnestly beg'd of me that I would yet present to this same Man the Grace of my Light and of my Felicity, instead of punishing him by depriving him of them. And because it is very just that the precious intercession of my Son, should not be rejected, I will for his sake treat Man and his Posterity, as if it were they themselves that had offer'd up to me a Petition of so great value."

As Words are of themselves very indifferent, and that 'tis enough that you may not abuse them, to tell you in what sense they are taken, we shall call this a *first sort* of Justification, using the Word Justification in a sense

sense that denotes the generality of the ways and Operations by which God brings Men to Blessedness. In this act we may call the accusation, *imputation of Sin*; the ground of this accusation is the *guilt*, founded on the inherence of Sin. The Declaration of God that he no longer holds Man unworthy, is the *Absolution* of the accusation: The Intercession of *Jesus Christ*, is the *Merit* and the *Righteousness*. For *Jesus Christ* Merits, and 'tis just that his Mediation should not be rejected and of no effect. God's looking upon Man as if instead of being unworthy of having his Grace offer'd him, he had himself made this precious request of Intercession, may be call'd an *Imputation of the Merit and Righteousness of Jesus Christ*: And the actual tender of Grace, is the *effect* of it. This is what is contain'd in this first act.

Chap. VIII.

VII. If Men have a mind to give the name of Justification to the absolution of this first accusation, they may; provided they do not, because of the ambiguity of the Word, ascribe those effects to this sort of Justification that belong not to it. It is none of its effects to make Man pleasing to God, nor to put him into the state and right of Salvation; no, but it puts him into a state wherein God by divers means offers him his Grace all the time of his Life. And although Sin (the ground of unworthiness and guilt) be in him, God does nevertheless offer him his Grace, as if by Sinning he contracted no guilt; and so he winks at his Sin, and passes over that Consideration: St. Paul calls this the *passing over Transgressions which God bears with*: This is the *nécessité* some have made such a noise about, and yet have not well understood it. The same Apostle calls the same thing in the Book of the *Acts*, a *passing by* of God's Sight; as if God casting his Eyes upon Men had a mind to pass by that Consideration, and to take no notice of it. God, says he, *having winked at (ἐπαυξάνει) the time of Ignorance, now by the Gospel makes an offer of Repentance to all Men every where*. As if he should have said, "Tho' Men were unworthy of God's Grace and Care, through the Darkness of Ignorance and Sin into which they were sunk, God nevertheless passed by the Consideration of their unworthiness, and in times past, offer'd them his Graces,

VII. This first sort of Justification does not make a Man pleasing to God. What the passing by and the winking at Sin is. Rom. 3. 25. 26.

Acts 17. 30.

" and

Chap. VIII. "and testify'd his care of them a Thousands ways
 "both inward and outward, to which he now added this
 "incomparable advantage, the offering them the same
 "Grace of Purification and Repentance by the out-
 "ward Preaching of the Gospel.

VIII. 'Tis evident that all this is absolute on God's
 and Jesus Christ's part, without and before Man's hav-
 ing any hand in it: His Sin, both in himself and
 Posterity (who are Originally Sinners in him) is for-
 given him and them thus far, that God offers them
 his Light and his Joys, as if they were not unworthy
 of them. But it is plain, this is not enough to save
 Man actually; and if Man stopt here he would be
 condemn'd upon other Articles, that might be brought
 in against him.

IX. (Second) For Instance, this second Accusation
 may be drawn up against him. *Tho' God be pleased
 not to repute Man unworthy the offer of his Grace after
 his having turn'd away from him, yet is he in effect in-
 capable of it, and therefore it must actually be taken from
 him; the reason of this incapacity is, because Man will
 indeed continue and remain in his Unworthiness and Sin.*
 He loves his Darkness and his vicious Inclinations,
 and actually follows them: Now it is not just that
 Light and Good, should be put with Darkness and
 Evil, in a Soul that delights in Evil, and does it actu-
 ally and voluntarily. Therefore it is not just that
 Man should be Saved. Here you have a second Ac-
 cusation with the grounds of it.

X. Justification from this Accusation. X. This Accusation cannot be made void, as the
 first was, by the interposal of God alone, and of the
 imputation of the Merit and Righteousness of Jesus
 Christ, without the Intervention and Co-operation of
 Man. Were it so that God should will to plant his
 Grace, his Good, and his Salvation, in a Soul that
 loved Darkness and Evil, and went on in its Sin, God
 would be a Minister and Friend of Sin. Which is
 impossible. There must therefore come in here some-
 thing on Man's part. And what is that?

First, That he cease to do Evil; Secondly, That
 he turn his Desire, Understanding, and Will, whither
 God calls him. When he does so, God will begin to
 set up in him a Divine Light, which will put Know-
 ledge

ledge into his Understanding, and the love of Goodness into his Will; and Man resigning himself up to this Light, which is Faith, will through it both in mind and will cleave to the fulness of Grace and Heavenly Treasures. And by these means will the second Accusation, we spoke of just now, become null: And in these or the like Terms may Man be pronounced justified from it by God.

"Tho' Man, after I had overlook'd his unworthiness, still remain really incapable of enjoying what is good by his Love and Practice of what is Evil; yet because he has not gone on in Rebellion against my Voice, but has left off to do what I shew'd him was ill, and has turn'd away his desire from it, and so the Divine Light of my Faith has found place in him, and works in him more and more, and drives out the Evil, and plants in him the love of the Eternal Good; I declare, that pardoning Man upon the account of the righteous Merit of my Son, all the Sins he committed before he gave himself up to my call, I hold him for a subject capable of eternal Life, or of the fulness of the infinite Good, because of his living Faith; for that he having turn'd away his desire, his mind, his Heart from Evil, and having turn'd them towards the Good, which is God himself, this God, this Light, this Good which begins to Operate in him, is able, if Man persevere, infallibly to save him." Here you see the Absolution or Justification from this second Accusation, upon which there are some remarks to be made.

XI. The first is, that this sort of Justification, in this degree of it, is not the next means or state to the enjoyment of Happiness. There is a great deal more behind yet; seeing this Man, tho' he be converted to God by Faith, yet has within him still the ground of Sin, the acts of which he has broken off, with the Inclinations of his Evil habits make him sometimes renew through surprize and frailty. Nevertheless, should a Man die in this state, he would not die in the state of Damnation, but of Salvation, which he would enjoy after having gone through the Purification we have spoken of in the foregoing Chapter, through

XI. That this second sort of Justification is not the nearest state or means of Blessedness.

Chap.
VIII.

*XII. That
this state
is not a
state of
the know-
ledge nor
of the
certainty
of Salva-
tion.*

through which he must pass to enjoy the nearest and most absolute Justification, whereof I shall speak presently.

XII. The second thing to be noted is, that this Justification that God does indeed pronounce concerning such a Man, declaring him to be one of those that are capable of Eternal Life, is not ordinarily known with certainty by that Man; because he has still remaining in him a thousand Imperfections and Faults that keep him from the clear sight and Perception of God's Operation. He rather feels his sins and darkness, which make him afraid of Damnation. Besides, he being then not very much accustomed to good as yet, nor much unaccustomed from Evil, nor thoroughly purify'd in his Ground, the sight and certainty of his Salvation would prove hurtful to him, would cast him into Presumption, Security and Pride, and awaken in him a thousand Passions that are not yet dead; and it is impossible in truth that he should see his Salvation but as a thing at a great distance off, between which and him there lie a thousand Perils and Precipices, which strike him with fear, and into which he assuredly falls if he grow remiss, and is lost for ever.

*XIII.
How far
that cer-
tainty
may go
which a
Man has
in this
state.*

XIII. Therefore for the Third Remark, the certainty which this Justification begets, is an Hope, a Fortitude, and a Courageousness, tempered with Fear and Uncertainty. A Man knowing his Will is good, that he hates Evil and loves Good, that God offers his Grace, and that with that he shall be strong enough to break through all; and that on God's part it will not fail; but then he has also Experience of his own Weaknesses and Vileness, and knows that he is not yet fully acquainted with the depth and greatness of them, and fears they will sink him, whenever they are laid open. And moreover he sees himself encompass'd with innumerable Evils where he fears he shall stick and perish. And thus is the certainty that may be had in this state, bounded. We should not so absolutely as some do, make a mock at the uncertainty of Salvation in those that have true Faith. These are not Things incompatible in Beginners, no, nor in Proficients; and that he will know whoever shall grove and taste this state.

XIV.

XIV. I fear most, if not all, of those who boast so much of their assurance of Salvation, and not at all to doubt of it, if they are not of the number of those I shall speak of in the Section following (of whom there are very few at present in the World) are such as are deceived and blinded by *Satan*, and have not as yet one Grain of true Faith; but whose old Man is lively and lusty, and loves to feed himself with the persuasion that his fancy is carrying him to Paradise, while in truth he is Coach'd away to the Devils in Hell. Our old Man so mortally hates Sadness, Troubles, Hell and Uncertainty; he is so highly delighted when he is promis'd Paradise, Grace and Salvation fully and undoubtedly, that if he has the luck to meet with some hellish Charioteer, some pretended Guide of Souls that knows how by fine studied Discourses, and guiled over with Scripture Phrases to promise to bring to Paradise if he will but be govern'd, and that he may already reckon himself sure and certain of it upon this and t'other condition; what does he, but mounts immediately with all his Heart into the Chariot with this blind driver, and ridiculously Triumphs over all those that have not the same certainty that he has, who no longer doubts of any thing, till he sees himself thrown into Hell, and where too he shall have no ground of his being damn'd, I design not hereby, I say it again, to destroy the hope of true Believers; but to describe it as it is in Truth, and such as we may observe it was in the Publican, who was justified in the Sense we are now speaking of. *Jesus Christ* gives us to understand that the state of his Justification was a state of fear and dread, but mingled with an humble trust in God, to whom he pray'd; and this made him cast down his Eyes, smite his Breast, and withdraw from within the Temple to stand at the Gate, and there say in his Heart, *God be merciful to me a Sinner*. When *Jesus Christ* says, *he went away justified*, the meaning is not that he went home to his House deliver'd of his fear, and full of assurance of his Salvation, and never more doubted of it: It may be this pious Person (supposing it a History and not a Parable) was now more in doubt of it than ever; but though he appeared possibly as damn'd in his own Eyes,

XIV. *The old Adam loves the certainty of his pretended Justification. The justify'd in this Class are here in fear and dread.*

Luke
18. 14.

Chap. yet was he justified in God, and by the Sentence of
VIII. the Divine Will, in that manner as I have said God
justifies Persons in this state.

XV. How
in this
second
sort of
Justifica-
tion, the
Merit
and
Righte-
ousness of
Christ
are im-
puted to
Man, as
also his
own Faith
is im-
puted to
him for
Righte-
ousness.

XV. In this Second sort of Justification it is not hard to observe how the Guilt and the Grounds of the Accusation are taken away by the Faith and Merits, and Righteousness of *Jesus Christ* (which were always confirm'd and enlarg'd in his Incarnation, Life, Death, and after his Ascension). Man's Faith carrying him from his Darkness towards the Light and towards Eternity, God for *Jesus Christ's* Sake, whose Intercession, and all other righteous Acts which he did to obtain Grace, justly deserve to be ratify'd, looks upon Man notwithstanding his past sin and present infirmities, as capable of Salvation, and as truly in a state of Grace, as if he had never sin'd; or as if having sin'd, he had of himself offer'd to God an Intercession of as high value and Merit as *Christ's*. This is the *Imputation of the Merit and Righteousness of Jesus Christ* as far as concerns this Article. God *imputes* to him *his own Faith likewise for Righteousness*; that is to say, That Man turning away his Desire, his Mind and his Heart from Evil, and inclining them to Good as well as he can, though encompass'd with Infirmities which he desires to be freed from, God takes this Faith of an absolute and resign'd desire, for a valuable Satisfaction to the just Condition that is requisite to the being worthy of his Grace.

XVI.
This se-
cond sort
of Justi-
fication
discharges
not from
suffering,
nor is it
the near-
est means
to Peace
and Life
Eternal.

XVI. Only let us observe, and that well too, for fear of being deceived, that this Justification and this Imputation of the Merit and Righteousness of *Jesus Christ* do not acquit Man of suffering for his Sins; that in this degree they do not put Man into the capacity or worthiness, or nearest Disposition for Salvation, nor into a certainty of Peace; but into a State that is yet distant and very mutable. If Man Exercises Acts of Faith, and if they grow stronger and stronger, and if it be so that he die in these acts, he shall not perish; but shall be saved after he has pass'd through Purification; but if he break off his Acts of Faith, and sin mortally, setting his Desire, his Mind, and his Heart again upon that which is not God, and die in these wicked acts, as it but too often happens, he is lost irrecoverably;

recoverably ; but if he live yet longer, and rise again, and return to his first Faith, and continue therein, he may yet, during this Life, enter into the inward Purification, and thence into the true, and properly call'd Justification, which is a state of Tranquillity, the nearest state and immediately capable of Eternal Life. 'Tis of this Justification the Apostle speaks in the 3d, 4th, 5th, 6th, 7th, and 8th Chapters of the Epistle to the Romans, and of which we are going to speak.

XVII. Supposing things were so with some one as we have seen them, and he should upon this think to lay claim immediately to the Enjoyment of Eternal Life, or at least to pretend to be worthy or fit to be immediately received into it if he should die in this state, how would he come off if God, if his Conscience, if Satan, or one of them should accuse him ? *Though this Man has actually turn'd away his Desire, his Mind and his Heart from the Practice of evil, and turns them actually towards God ; nevertheless it is as yet by acts so weak, so short and so broken, that it is but a very poor Business ; much less is it by strong and firm Habits that may be relied on and trusted with the Treasure of Salvation, for his ground is still full of evil Inclinations, to Darkness, and of Roots of habitual Vices, which he sometimes Relapses into, though through Surprise. He yet neither knows Himself, nor God, nor Good nor Evil as he ought, and to the bottom : he neither loves God, nor things Eternal, nor his Neighbour, as he ought, he does not the Will of God as he should : The old Adam is not yet dead in him ; he does not hate nor deny himself as he should ; nor does he pluck up out of his Heart the Root of evil Desires, sinful Imaginations and Inclinations to things on Earth, and to self. But these Dispositions are undoubtedly incompatible with Life Eternal ; 'tis impossible that a Soul wherein these inherently are, should receive and take into it Eternal Life with these Dispositions. Therefore such a Soul, notwithstanding its little and poor Faith, ought not to be gratify'd with the Gift of Eternal Life.*

XVIII. This Accusation is but too well grounded, not take away the ground of this Accusation unless he be fully purify'd.

Chap.
VIII.

and 'tis utterly impossible a Man should be justify'd from it, and his Conscience be in perfect Peace, unless the ground of his Soul be first wholly purify'd by the Light of Faith; a state which is follow'd by the compleat Justification we are in quest of.

To attain this Justification these things are necessary, which you may call as you please, either Preparatives, or Ways or Means, or parts of Justification, according as your Conception of the whole shall be stricter or larger. Let us not dispute about words, but mind the things; some whereof must be the Operations of Man, and the other God's Graces infus'd and inherent, which are follow'd by the Divine Absolution.

XIX. Dis-
positions
of Man
for the
true and
perfect
Justifica-
tion.

XIX. First, It is necessary that Man use his most earnest Endeavours to grow strong in Faith, to perfect and quicken it to the highest Degree; that he diligently follow all that is Good, and avoid all that is Evil, in Words, Thoughts, Affections and Deeds, in a word, that he labour to tear up by the Roots all that is Evil out of his Heart: God will assist him with new Supplies of his Grace, to make some Progress in the work, and so he will go through the active Purification; but designing to proceed, or it may be rest himself, God discovers to him in the bottom of his Soul, an infinite abyss of Misery and Evils, which he saw not before. He will then endeavour to cleanse himself of them, and to pluck up their Root as the Law Commands, *Thou shalt not cover*; but after many Attempts, he will still find he cannot do it; and the Law of Sin, the Bent and Inclination to Evil will be stronger in him than the Law of God, because of the infirmity of his Fund, which is yet carnal. Not being able therefore, after all his pains, to compass that; quite despairing of any good to be done by himself, he throws himself upon the Righteous Will of God to do with him what he pleases, and pleads guilty, and condemns himself as to this Accusation, that is founded upon the Root of Evil, as being yet in him.

XX. How
God takes
away the
ground
of this

XX. Then God investing this Soul by a mighty infusion of his Grace, renews in it the living Spirit of *Jesus Christ*, and this Spirit takes away the grounds of Accusation, and works Righteousness in Man.

the

the Accusation; he imprints, he quickens, and strongly Roots in the Soul his Divine and living Law, its Principles, its Inclinations, and the Acts of Faith, Love and Righteousness, and he extirpates out of it all that the Law of God requires should be extirpated, the Inclinations and Root of Evil, and the most inveterate Concupiscence (this is the Passive Purification spoken of above) and thus the Law of God is fulfilled by the Spirit of Faith of *Jesus Christ*, or by the Spirit of *Jesus Christ*, according to that Excellent saying of the Apostle, *The Law* (the Principles, the Ways and the Acts) *of the Spirit of Life of Jesus Christ has freed me from the Law* (from the Bents, the Inclinations and Habits) *of Sin and Death* (till then we are yet in Death.) *For what I could not do of my self through the Law*, (which God commanded) *the Law not having strength enough, because of the carnal, weak and corrupt disposition of Man's inward Ground, God* (who upon the account of sin, sent his Son in Flesh, like to sinful Flesh) *has done, and condemned sin*, mortifying it to the very Root, *in the Flesh*, in the carnal and weak ground of the Soul; *that what the Law righteously exacts might be fulfilled in us, whi now no more walk after the Flesh, but after the Spirit.*

Rom. 3.
30.Rom. 8.
3, 4.

X. I. The Man that is advanced thus far, is truly *XXI. H* Righteous by an infus'd and inherent Righteousness, *the act of* by Faith and Charity. This Righteousness must of *true Ju-* necessity be in him before God makes the Declaration *stification* thereof to him, or thereby justifies him and speaks *is done.* Peace to his Soul. For as in the Darkness of Purification he knew not himself; saw himself sometimes accus'd, he knew not for what, then all of a sudden surrounded, or indeed soak'd in Evils, he thought himself innocent of; besides that he knows the Scripture tells us, *That the Heart of Man is so deceitful that none but God can know it, and that there are ways that seem right to a Man, and yet the end thereof is death; all this has taught him not to dare to judge any more of himself, or of his state, nor any more to promise himself Righteousness and Peace.* And therefore it is that the Holy Ghost must assure him of it, before his Soul can rest satisfy'd. And indeed, no other Judgment could give him Peace, nor assure him that he is righteous.

Chap. teous. And this the Spirit of God does by his Di-
 VIII. vine inward Light, and by a Motion which none but
 God can excite in the Soul, which being purify'd in
 the Light, and empty of all that is not God, under-
 stands with a certainty that is not subject to delusion,
 and with a Joy ineffable, the reality of that adoreable
 saying, *Thou art all fair, my beloved, and there is no*
 Cant. 4. *spot in thee.* A Man feels himself eas'd of a heavy
 7. load, and sees it cast as it were *into the deep of the Sea.*
 Mic. 7. The troublesome Representation, the affrightening Re-
 19. membrance, and the painful Thought of Sins are blot-
 If. 44. *ted out as a cloud,* and pass away, never more to return
 22. and be charged upon the Soul. They whose inward
 ground is not thoroughly pure, cannot come up to this;
 but might take the flattering Motions of what is yet
 corrupt in them, for the Declarations of Divine justifi-
 cation; which is the Source of Illusion.

*Deduction, Particularities and Difficulties
 concerning the true Justification.*

XXII. XXII. 'Tis, as I said at the beginning of this Chap-
 That none ter, this Declaration of God to the Soul, which ought
 but this to be call'd, and indeed is the true *Justification*, which
 Justifica- God opposes to an Accusation which cannot otherwise
 tion can be disannulled; because this accusation is founded upon
 null the the inherent and inward Indisposition of Mans Heart,
 last accu- upon his being still in great Darkness, and penetrated
 sation. with the Roots of sin; a state not only inconsistent
 with Eternal Life, but also with Tranquility and Peace;
 in as much as Man then not well knowing himself,
 cannot relie on the Judgment he may make of himself.
 Nor can this be taken away but by the ways I have set
 down, and by a Declaration of the Holy Ghost in the
 Soul: as if he should say, "I declare that this Accusation,
 "which formerly was true, is now altogether false;
 "and that this Soul is wholly purify'd to its very in-
 "nermost ground, from all the Bents and Roots of sin;
 "that there is nothing in it to be condemned; that
 "on the contrary the Principles of Good, and of Ver-
 "rue, are living in it, and there rectify and regulate all
 "the motions of a Heart, wherein there is nothing
 but

“ but what is righteous and pleasing to God, nothing
 “ but what is of worthy eternal Life, of its fulness, of
 “ the infinite Light and joy which *Jesus Christ* has
 “ merited for Man by his Intercession, by his Life,
 “ by his Death, and by whatever else he did and
 “ suffer’d.

Chap.
VIII.

XXIII. In this Justification there is to be seen not only the *Imputation*, but also the true and real *Application*, which God therein makes to Man of the *Merit*, *Righteousness*, and all the duties which *Jesus Christ* discharg’d for Man in his Mediation between him and God: For God treats Man then as if he had never Transgressed, and as if he had always been in the state of worthiness, that is in *Jesus Christ*, which mov’d God to take no notice of and to pass by Man’s Sin, and to give him his Grace. There we see also how God *imputes his Faith to him for Righteousness*: For Faith having cleansed the Soul of all its Sins, and having filled him with Sorrow and Regret for having committed them, and with an infinite and most ardent desire that he never had done so, and that he had never been so Unrighteous as to Sin against God; God accepts this Faith of Grief and Desire for the Deed, as if in effect the Soul had never been guilty of the least Unrighteousness, but as if it had ever been as Righteous as it desired to have been.

XXIII. How God does in this compleat Justification impute and apply the Merits and Righteousness of *Jesus Christ*, and that he imputes Faith for Righteousness.

XXIV. This Justification contains therefore first a perfect purity of the Soul, wrought by the infusion and inhabitation of Faith, and of the Holy Ghost. Secondly, An imputation, and what is more, an Application of the Merits of *Jesus Christ*. In the third place, the imputation of Faith for Righteousness; and in the fourth place, a judicial Declaration of God, that the Soul is pure, and that there is nothing in it to be condemn’d. This fourth thing is the most formal and full act of Justification: But also it is indissoluble from all the rest, and necessarily preceded by Purification, and the entire Destruction of Sin; for he only that is dead to Sin is justified and freed from Sin; and so long as the living Law of God is not put into the ground of the Heart, nor engraven in the inward parts by the Holy Ghost, so long is there no actual freedom, from Sin, no *deems*; no Declaration that we

XXIV. Four things inseparable in Justification. The formal act of Justification. Rom. 6. 7. Heb. 10. 16. 18.

Chap.
VIII.

are loosed from it, otherwise, this Declaration would be false, and so would the Justification: Death must go before, and be follow'd by a Principle of new Life, and spiritual Resurrection: Which is mark'd out to us by the process of *Jesus Christ*, who died and rose again, and then was declar'd and own'd to be the Son of God by his Resurrection from the Dead: And so *St. Paul* applies it to the business of our Salvation; *He was deliver'd for our offences, and rose again for our Justification.* This will be fulfill'd in us when our old Man is Crucified and Dead with *Jesus Christ* for his offences; and *Jesus Christ* risen in us by his Spirit, to declare us alive to Righteousness: Then are we justified, and understand how Christ rose again for our Justification.

Rom. 4.
25.

XXV.
*How the
act of Ju-
stification
is a judi-
cial act of
God, and
not an in-
fusion of
inherent
Grace.*

XXV. Men have disputed so long whether Justification were done by an infus'd Grace, or whether it were a judicial and declarative act, that one can hardly tell what to determine. To this the answer may be divers according to the diversity of the things consider'd, which yet are all comprehended or united in Justification. Nevertheless I say, that Justification, in the most exact and strict Sense thereof, does not consist in an infus'd Grace, or that it is not perform'd by the infusion of Grace; but by the Declaration that this Grace before infus'd has brought forth Righteousness, which God notifies and declares to the Soul. And so I do readily assent and grant to those that maintain with so great noise and clamour, & *ad nauseam usque*; That Justification is a judicial Act (*actus forensis* as they say) that this is very true. But because the old *Adam* would fain take advantage from this concession, to nestle himself, tho' as yet alive and vigorous, in Justification, 'tis but just I take all convenient precaution to dislodge him.

XXVI.
*Abuse
that is
made of
Justifica-
tion un-*

XXVI. It is so notorious that nothing can be more, that Men who are still corrupt, and that live in Corruption, hunt after such a Justification, as will give them assurance that they have right to eternal Life, that they are both Righteous, and in a state wherein
der pretence of its being a judicial Act.

if

if they die, they should presently be carried into Paradise as true Children of God.

Chap.
VIII.

In a Word, they enquire after a Justification that sets the Soul in perfect Peace with God and itself; That is to say, Men pretend to seek, all corrupt and impure as they are yet, a Justification the most distinguish'd and sublime, which is that we are at present speaking of. And as they read or hear that it consists in a declarative and judicial act, and not in the infusion of any inherent Grace, immediately the self love of their corrupt Nature, the old *Adam*, that very well knows he has no infus'd Grace, swallows this Doctrine with all his Heart, and fancies, that tho' he has no other Grace infus'd or inherent, but that of impurity, yet that's no matter, nor will it hinder him from being justified, if he can but strongly persuade himself that he is, and believe that God does on his behalf make such a judicial act; so that according to this account of it, Justification is no more than a Declaration made in consequence of a hearty perswasion that God looks upon us as if we were as Righteous as *Jesus Christ*, tho' we be really no better than the vilest Miscreants. Truly the corrupt Heart of the old *Adam*, that flattering and perverse Heart, that Heart full of the love of its own advantages and interests would be a very stupid Beast, could it not work itself into this persuasion and make this Application; since it may be done with so much the more firmness and ease, the more blind, the more corrupt a Man is, the more fill'd and stuff'd he is with self-love, presumption, pride and phrensy. And so now the old *Adam* lays himself down in rest and peace, in the cradle of Justification, where this Son of Perdition is rock'd to Sleep, and hopes when he wakes to meet with eternal Life, which he believes himself Heir of.

XXVII. One can have no better proof of Men's being generally thus dispos'd, then from the pains some have taken to make them so. Some after having confess'd with their Mouth to a mortal Man, that they have committed so and so many impurities, think themselves justified from them upon the judicial Declaration and Absolution of this same Man, and some outward Ceremony. Others inculcate to their Hearers

XXVII.
Proof of
this
abuse.

Chap.
VIII.

Hearers and Disciples, even in their Catechisms, what naturally amounts to as much, witness the Question and Answer prescribed in the matter before us.

Question. How are you justified (or just) before God?

Answer. " Only by true Faith in *Jesus Christ* :
 " So that altho' my Conscience accuse me that I have
 " grievously sinned against all God's Commandments,
 " and never kept one of them, and am still prone to
 " all manner of Evil, and that at all times, yet all
 " this, notwithstanding, God without any desert of
 " mine, and of pure Grace, imputes and gives to me,
 " the perfect satisfaction, righteousness and holiness of
 " *Jesus Christ*, as if I never had had, or committed any Sin,
 " and what is yet more, as if I had fulfilled that entire
 " Obedience, which *Jesus Christ* paid for me, pro-
 " vided only, that I do with full assurance of Heart
 " apply this so great a benefit to my self.

'Tis visible that one who finds himself in the state describ'd by this Catechumen, a continual Transgressor of all God's Commandments, and still inclin'd to break them, and yet pretending in such state to be holden for one as Righteous as *Jesus Christ*, cannot possibly be other than a Wicked Man, wholly sold unto Iniquity, in whom the old *Adam* is so predominant, that there is not in him so much as one spark of true Faith, and in short, that he is a slave to Corruption: And yet he is not only promised Liberty, but is even made to believe and say, that notwithstanding this damnable Disposition, to which he yet wholly lives, he is actually freed and justified, if his impure and wicked Heart, do but firmly believe that all that *Jesus Christ* has done is imputed to him. And is not this a horrible Notion of Justification, proper only to ruin and damn Men eternally instead of Saving them! O how well would Men do to strike out such things as these, that are a destructive and deadly Poison; our Books that are put into the Hands of the Youth and of the common People, who do not one of a Thousand ever think of the forced Explications, that are given to these Words to make them say quite another thing to what they naturally signify and imprint upon those that read them. Is the dangerous Dispositions wherein

wherein they put and keep Souls, a less considerable inconvenience, than the altering or leaving out some Words in a Book we dare not meddle with because left us by our Ancestors, whom we cannot but own to have been fallible, and indeed in the dark yet as to many things. O how unluckily are we become Idolizers of forms and of other works of Men that were not yet purified nor enlighten'd by the Holy Spirit! And how desirable a thing were it, that Men would shake off this Slavery, and hearken to nothing but the Light of Truth!

XXVIII. To shew how unjustly the old *Adam* seeks such like subterfuges in Justification upon account of the manner of explaining it by a judicial and declarative Act, and not by an inherent Grace, we need only to reflect on the Author of Justification, and on the quality of this Act.

XXVIII.
That in
such Per-
sons the
declara-
tive act of
Justifica-
tion can-
not come
from God.

Who is to be the Author of this justificative Declaration?

Is it to be the Thought or Heart of Man, or the Letter of the Scripture, or the Spirit of the living God?

If it be Man's Heart, all is but uncertainty and deceit, especially if this Heart be yet impure, prone to all Evil, and unprofitable to all Good, and that it continually Transgresses God's Commandments. Nor can it be barely the Letter of Scripture, wherein are to be found only general Declarations, and no Applications to particular Persons. It must therefore be the Spirit of God.

But a Heart corrupt and full of pollutions, is incapable of the Tranquillising Motions of the Holy Spirit, and of his Inhabitation and Operations that produc'd divine Peace and Acquiescence in the State we are in with God. Light would sooner produce Darkness than the Spirit of God would make such a Declaration in Hearts so disposed.

XXIX. It must be further observ'd (to come to the quality of the act) that there are two kinds of justificative Declarations, one true and the other false.

XXIX.
Two kinds
of judi-
cial acts.

One false and the other true. That God cannot be the Author of that kind that is false, as it would be to declare that a wretched Man is a righteous Man.

This

Chap. VIII. This is Solomon's distinction, who says, The false is an abomination before God. *He that justifieth the wicked, and he that condemneth the just, even they both, are abomination to the Lord.* To justify the wicked is to declare that a wicked Man is a just Man. Behold a false Declaration, and a judicial act abominable and lying. Now what judicial act would Men have in the matter of Justification, a false or a true one? Are they for a Declaration that a foul and wicked Heart, is nevertheless Righteous and clean? This would be a judicial Declaration, and an *actus forensis*, that none but the Devil can pronounce in the Court of a blinded Conscience. This is what God is not capable of. There can no judiciary Acts come from him but what are founded upon the Truth and Reality of the thing, nor any Declarations but such as are most true. So that when he in Justification declares, that a Soul is pure and just, and that there is nothing in it to be condemn'd, the thing is really so in the inward Ground and Frame of this Soul. And if this were not antecedently in the Soul, the God of Truth would never declare it just, but impure, polluted, and widely distant from the disposition to Life Eternal, and from solid and divine Peace. *He that curses those that call good evil, and evil good; darkness light, and light darkness; sweet bitter, and bitter sweet, and that holds not the guilty guiltless;* would and could he declare that just, which is indeed unjust and wicked? One Grain of common Sense should make us ashamed of such a foolish and extravagant Thought.

II. 5. 20. XXX. It is true, St. Paul says, *God justifies the wicked;* but in very deed is that to say, That God declares a wicked Man to be a righteous Man? How can this enter into any Man's Thoughts? God justifies the wicked, not one that is still really in wickedness, but him that was once therein, but is got out of it, and is cleans'd from it; such a wicked Man is declar'd just. But, you will say, if one be just before this Declaration, what is the benefit of it, and what necessity is there for it? I have sufficiently told that already; must I repeat it again? When the Light of God purifies a Soul, it puts it into troubles and into painful and tormenting Anxieties, as we have seen not long since. Such a Soul when

XXX.
How God
justifies
the wicked.
Rom. 4.
7.

when it has arrived at the term and end of its compleat and perfect Purification, and is really righteous, unless God afterwards wrought in it after a new and special manner, would have no reason to think itself just upon the Report of its own Heart, and much less would it have the inexpressible Sensations of its Deliverance, and of that Peace that are inseparable from the Divine Assurance that it is again entered into Friendship with God, except God by this Divine Declaration gave them to it. And is not this a considerable Benefit? And what would you have more?

And again, it may be said, that the word to justify in this Passage of St. Paul, *God justifies the wicked*, does not signify God's declarative act only, but the Operations also by which God purify'd the wicked, and the continuance of his care over him in all the Stages through which he led him to translate him from a state of wickedness to that of Righteousness. We have seen but just now, that the word Justification, or to justify, was sometimes taken in this Sense, according to which it may be said, that the Object or Subject of Justification is a Person actually wicked, in whom God works to make him actually and really Righteous. Both the one and the other is true. But more than this is all Delusion.

XXXI. To what has been said, I make no doubt but there will be oppos'd certain Rules that are commonly urg'd on this Subject, and which pass for infallible Maxims, such as are, for instance; I. *That Justification preceeds Sanctification*, and not *Vice Versa*; II. *That good works do not preceed in him that is to be justified, but follow in him that is already justify'd*; with more to the same purpose, and therefore needless to be repeated.

If you would but take the trouble to consider what has been said, that the terms of Justification, and to justify, with their Derivatives, have a signification of large extent, and that they may denote divers things, you will find it no hard matter to observe some one or other to which these Maxims are Applicable; and in this Sense they will make nothing against us. But if we take Justification in the most proper and distinguish'd Sense, which is that wherein we explain'd it in

Chap.
VIII.

XXXI.
Two main
Difficul-
ties re-
lating to
the fore-
going
Doctrine.

Chap. VIII. in the last head, I say that with regard to that we must by no means rely upon the word of these pretended Axioms.

XXXII. To come to particulars that says *Justification goes before Sanctification*, is egregiously false. For proof of this, we need but consider the nature of Justification, which I think has been explain'd intelligibly enough to any one that has a mind to understand it. But if you likewise demand express Proofs from Scripture in the Point, I shall give you some.

That it is not true that Justification goes before Sanctification: That the Scripture is against this dangerous transposition.

Rom. 8. 28, 29. St. Paul does in express words place Sanctification before Justification, when he says by way of Gradation in the Epistle to the Romans, *Whom God foreknew, those he Predestinated to be conformable to the Image of his Son, that he might be the first-born among many Brethren; and whom he Predestinated, them he also call'd, and whom he call'd, them he also justify'd, and whom he justify'd, them he also glorify'd.* No one questions but St. Paul here makes a Gradation, and shews how God works step by step, and in order, what regards our Eternal Salvation. Observe we then how he proceeds. In the first place he says, That God fore-knows some, that is to say, that God wills to own and treat some (those that answer his design) as his People and Children, and to give them Eternal Life. Secondly, That these fore-known, or these he designs thus to save, *He has Predestinated to the likeness of his Son*, that is to say,

Rom. 6. v. 4, 5, 6, 7. 9. 11. that God has resolv'd and decreed, that as Jesus Christ died and rose again into a new Life where he dies no more, nor has Death any more power over him; so likewise shall these be made one plant with him by the conformity, and by the likenels and Image of his Death; so that their old Man be crucify'd with Jesus Christ, and the Body of sin destroy'd, and they serve sin no longer, but be Dead to it, be quit and free from it, and be risen into a new Life, as Jesus Christ, and in him. Here you see very plainly, Purification or Sanctification by which we are made Children of God, and Brethren of Jesus Christ, the first-born: For he that Sanctifieth (Jesus Christ that makes conformable to himself) and they that

Heb. 2. 11.

that are Sanctified, are, and come all of one Father, and therefore he is not ashamed (Jesus Christ) to call them Brethren, and so he shews himself to be the first-born among many Brethren. 'Tis our Apostle that thus explains himself throughout. Thirdly, Those whom he thus Predestinated and willed to become such, the same he calls to it, and engages actually in it; he dispenses both outwardly and inwardly to them whatever is necessary to render them conformable to the Image of the Death and Resurrection of Jesus Christ, or to purify and Sanctify them. In the fourth Place, those whom he has thus engaged and called to Purification and Sanctification, and who are become conformable to the Image of his Son Crucify'd and Risen again, *them he justifies*, declares them pure, just and freed from sin; *he that is dead is just and free from sin*; and *we are justify'd by the Resurrection of Jesus Christ*; that is to say, by the internal efficacy thereof, and conformity thereunto. Lastly, Our Apostle says, to finish his Gradation, that those whom God justify'd, he also glorify'd, giving us to understand, that Justification is follow'd immediately by Salvation, and the enjoyment of the Glory of God, or by the proximate worthiness or meetness to Glorification. He therefore did not believe that it was after Justification that Men were to Sanctify themselves, or that Sanctification came after Justification; but on the contrary, that Sanctification went before Justification, and that Glorification follow'd it. And the order wherein he delivers these things is plainly as follows.

Rom. 6.
7.
Rom. 4.
25.
Eph. 1.
20.
Phil. 3.
9, 10.
Rom. 6.
5.

1. God's Fore-knowledge of whom he Wills to save.

2. The Predestination and Resolution to make them pass through the likeness of the Image of Jesus Christ Crucify'd and rais'd again.

3. The actual Call, Engagement and Progress towards this likeness; and this is Purification and Sanctification.

4. Justification.

5. Glory and Salvation.

Chap.
VIII.

If the old *Adam*, who would fain be just without going through Death, has a mind to give them another order after his own Fancy and Pleasure, e'en let him ; but withal let him remember he does it to his own Eternal Damnation. He shall one day see whose Method will stand, God's or his, and how dearly he shall pay for so sortishly putting, as they say, The Cart before the Horse.

The truth of this may be proved from many more Testimonies of Scripture ; for Example, the same Apostle does in another place propose again the same Gradation we saw but now, when he says to the faithful of *Corinth*, *Ye are wash'd, ye are Sanctify'd, ye are Justify'd in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.* Again, in another place he says, *That the washing of Regeneration, and the renewing of the Holy Ghost, are shed on us, that we being justify'd by his Grace, may be Heirs of Eternal Life.* Do you observe the Order, 1st. To be wash'd, 2d. That we may be justify'd, 3d. And then sav'd.

St. Peter supposes, that one must be first *dead to sin*, before one can *live to Righteousness*, or before one is in the state of Justification.

By all the Types of the Law we see, that a Man was really to be Wash'd, Cleans'd and Sanctify'd, before he was Justify'd, or before he was declar'd and look'd upon as Pure and Clean.

The Apostle in the 9th and 10th Chapters to the *Hebrews*, shews, more than once, and that with Strength and Cleareness, That before God forgets sins, or remembers them no more, before he silences the Accusation made by Conscience ; that is, before he justifies, that the Conscience must be purified and sanctified in the Blood of *Jesus Christ*, by the Divine Vertue of his Spirit of Suffering and Purification.

But to cut off all Caviel, please to take notice, that if by Sanctification be meant the Habit of Holiness, or habitual Sanctification, the confirmation and growth in the Habits of all Holy Vertues ; in this Sense (which is that of some places of Scripture) Sanctification follows justification. But when by Sanctification is understood actual Purification till it attain to the compleat term of full and real Purity, inclusively ; in this

Rom. 6.
22.

this Sense, which is the most usual, Sanctification necessarily goes before Justification, and to hold the contrary would but flatter and lull asleep the old Man, who heartily desires to live in his impurity, and yet to be justify'd and acquitted; whereas it is he that is dead that is justified and declared free of his sin, says St. Paul, who by so saying, that the Death of the old Man must preceed, before any can be declared free from sin and justify'd, does by that one word decide this whole Dispute.

Chap.
VIII.

Rom. 6.

7.

XXXIII.

XXXIII. To understand aright what there is of truth in this other Maxim. *That good works do not go before him that is to be justified, but follow him when he is so;* (*Opera bona non precedunt justificandum sed sequuntur justificationem*) it must be noted, That there are three sorts of works (I speak not of wicked ones.)

Whether

good works

go before

or follow

Justifica-

tion. Three

sorts of

works.

(1.) The

first, car-

nal works

of the

Law.

(1.) The first are those, which a Man does while being yet in sin and accused by his Conscience, he endeavours to deliver himself of them, and to come to a state of Righteousness by means of practising by the strength that he has, certain things which he thinks the best, whether they be some Ceremonies which are thought to be of wonderful efficacy when joyn'd with certain carnal Advantages, which was the case of the Jews, who with their carnal descent from Abraham, Circumcision, Sacrifices, and other legal Rites, fancy'd they could come up to a state of freedom from sin, and the Accusation of it, or whether these things a Man practices as the best, be to turn away from Vice as well as he can, and to practise Vertue according to the strength he has, but without expecting the inward Operation and Grace of God, the case of the ancient and modern *Pelagians*. All these works are in Scripture termed *works of the Law*, and indeed but carnal, never works or Fruits of the Spirit; and 'twould be very improper to call them good works: (may be I have done so in one place or other.) These works ought neither to go afore nor follow Justification; they are but dung: And if it be in this Sense that St. *Augustin* said, the Vertues of the Heathen were shining Sins, he had reason for it.

R

(2) The

Chap.
VIII.

(2.) *The
second
sort of
good
Works :
These
precede
Justifica-
tion.*

(2.) The second sort of Works, is when to be freed from Sin and its accusation, a Man practices all that he believes pleasing to God, whether in matter of Ceremonies, or Vertue, of Mortification, Abstinence, Circumspection, of good Thoughts and good Actions, imploring at the same time the inward Grace and Operation of God to come and assist him, assur'd, that if he for his part does his best, God will on his give him his Holy Spirit and Blessing, which working with and in him, will bring him to his desir'd end. And 'tis these Works that are properly call'd *good Works* : and manifest it is, that it would be a deadly Error to say, that these Works ought not to go before Justification ; tho' immediately afore Justification a Man's own activity ought to cease when it has done its utmost in the way of active Purification, to make room for the pure Operation of God in the passive Purification, which is follow'd by Justification.

(3.) *The
third sort
of Works
or Fruits
of the
Spirit ;
and 'tis
these
which
follow
Justifi-
cation.*

(3.) There is a third sort of Works, which are those that are done by one that is thoroughly purify'd and justify'd by the Holy Ghost, or rather which the Holy Ghost alone does in and by them. For the Holy Ghost dwelling in a regenerate Person puts Light into his Understanding, Vertue into his Heart, Motion into all his Faculties, and is the governour of his whole Life. These Works are in Scripture call'd, *the Works or Fruits of the Spirit*. And tho' they be very good, yet must they not be confounded with the Works of the second rank, or with the good Works I just now spoke of, they differing from them more than the Fruits of a Tree from its ingrafting or planting, from its watering and growth, and in a word, from its cultivation ; yet we may enlarge the signification of good Works, and extend them to the Works and Fruits of the Holy Spirit, which we may, if we will, call good Works ; and in this sense it will be true, *that good Works do not precede Justification, but follow it* : And if this Axiom be St. Augustin's, *Bona Opera non precedunt justificandum, sed sequuntur justificatum*, there is no doubt but it ought to be taken in this last sense. But where there is no necessity to express ourselves in any words of the Ancients, or of Scripture, the best way is, for avoiding confusion, to note always by different terms these

these three sorts of Works we have been speaking of, reserving for this, if we please, the words of *Works of the Law*, of *good Works*, of *Fruits or Works of the Holy Spirit*; this being the sense the Scripture also commonly uses them in. Chap. VIII.

XXXIV. What has been said is, I think, enough to remove these and many more Difficulties, too long to be particulariz'd, especially were I to do it with regard to all the places in Scripture that speak of Justification. With those that will but remember the distinct conceptions affixt to the terms us'd on this subject, all Difficulties, to my thinking, will be over. For Example, if it be remember'd that *to justify* signifies sometimes to work one or more things requisite to Justification, sometimes to give admission to them, sometimes to purify, sometimes to declare pure or righteous, that Righteousness denotes sometimes the purity and innocence the Law prescribes, sometimes the worthiness of the Merit and Satisfaction of *Jesus Christ*; and lastly, the Purity which God works in the Soul by his infus'd Grace, or by the Spirit of *Christ* and by Faith, that the *Blood of Jesus Christ* denotes both the inestimable Grace which *Jesus Christ* merited by shedding of his Blood, and also the Spirit of Purification, of Suffering, of Death unto Sin, of Strength and new Life; that the *Works of the Law*, *good Works*, and the *Works of the Holy Spirit*, are very different things; if, I say, all this be duly mark'd, what hard matter, or in truth, how easy will it be to comprehend what *St. Paul* means when he distinguishes the Righteousness of Works or of the Law, or our own Righteousness, from the Righteousness of God, the Righteousness of *Jesus Christ*, and the Righteousness of Faith; when he says, that by the one none can be justify'd, that by the other we are; that a Man is justify'd by God, by Grace, by and in the Blood of *Jesus Christ*, by the imputation of his Righteousness, by the imputation of Faith unto Righteousness, by the Spirit of *Jesus Christ* that effects in us the Righteousness exacted by the Law, and to which the Law bears witness; by Faith, and by such a Faith as makes not the Law void, but establishes and fulfils it. I might have drawn this matter to a greater length I own, but put it into a clearer Light at present, I could not. Rom. 3. 30.

XXXV. *Of a fourth sort of Justification, the highest of all and properly to the Saints.* XXXV. There remains one sort of Justification, or rather a higher degree of Justification, whereof I have said nothing yet, which is after the other, but in height before them all. Those to whom it belongs, are not unrighteous, the Devil has no more access to them, they are perfectly sound and just; and yet they are uneasy, and in a sort accused, not of God, much less of the Devil, but of their own Conscience, tho' most pure; and without losing their bliss, they could have no rest except they could find some means to quiet this Accusation. And this which at first seems so strange, is what I am going to unriddle.

XXXVI. *The Accusation of the Saints that preceeds this Justification.*

XXXVI. The Saints, fill'd with the Love of God and of his Righteousness, seeing themselves loaded with his infinite Benefits, could heartily wish from a Principle of Justice, that there were some proportion between the manner God deals with them, and that wherein they have carried themselves towards God. They think nothing can be more just than this conformity and correspondence: And yet they see in themselves on God's part gifts eternal, infinite and incomprehensible, but cannot discover in themselves, that on their part they have done any thing answerable and suitable to all this. They see in themselves on their part nothing but petty beginnings, and inconsiderable businesses, and a fearful disproportion of divine rewards. This torments them, to see that they are not worthy of God's Benefits, and yet that they must receive them. This is what they are ashamed of; they accuse themselves of unworthiness, and even of Ingratitude, that they neither have nor can do any thing to balance what God does: And thereupon say with a certain Mystick,

*Malav.
Sacred
Poems.*

Cruel Ingratitude! intolerable Pain!

My Nothing is my rack!

The God for whom I burn incessantly does act,
Why then so pow'rless I!

They would willingly say out of a Principle of Justice, *depart from us Lord*, especially when they consider, that, far from having on their part any worthiness, they have often offended God, nor have made sufficient reparation for their fault, nor suffer'd the
hundred

hundred thousandth part of the Pains which the Ingratitude, committed against a God that does nothing but heap infinite benefits on them, deserv'd. *I will establish* (says God representing an event of this Nature) *I will establish my Covenant with thee* ('tis the promise of Justification and Adoption) *and thou shalt know that I am the Lord*; so that when thou remembrest it (this and thy own behaviour) thou wilt be confounded, and never open thy Mouth more, so great will be thy shame when I am pacified towards thee, after this Justification. And indeed, this is a torment to a Heart generous, just, and loving justice, to see so vast a disproportion between his ways of acting towards God, and those in which God acts towards him.

XXXVII. But here *Jesus Christ* comes in to their assistance. He grants them their Thoughts are the most just that can be, and they have reason to be asham'd, confounded and troubled upon that account. But he shews them, that since he is in them, and they possess him in their interior, that they do thereby possess all that is in him, all that he has merited and all that he has done; for it is all inseparable from *Jesus Christ*: So that he in whom *Jesus Christ* is, has really in him whatever is indissoluble from him, viz. The merit of his Life, of his Sufferings and Death; and the more so, because *Jesus Christ* had no need of it for himself; but did all for those into whom he should be receiv'd, that they should take and look upon all the good that was his as their own, and his merits as being their own merits, and as such offer them to God. And this quiets and satisfies them. This puts an end to the concern and trouble they were in. They see and own, that this justice of God, this proportion of deserts and rewards of God's ways of acting towards Men and of theirs towards him, is exact and apparent in them by the merits and satisfaction of *Jesus Christ* who is theirs, who lives in them, and makes both himself and his goods, their Inheritance: And indeed, *Jesus* has merited and done enough to make a just proportion between the eternal reward and the desert of the Saints, which is that of *Jesus Christ*. They are contented, that their own impotence, unworthiness and nothingness (which before were their vexation) give

Chap.
VIII.
Ezek. 10.
62, 63.

XXXVII.
Justification from
this Accu-
sation by
the Imputa-
tion of
the Merit
and Sa-
tisfaction
of *Jesus*
Christ.
A new
kind of
discharge
from Suf-
ferings.

Chap. occasion to their *Jesus*, thus more illustriously to shew
VIII. forth his glory and his all.

Thy gifts are all the offerings we can make;
Yet they through Thee a greatness take.
From our straight Hearts, Thou nothing can't receive,
But what thy Goodness first does give.
God of my Soul! I to Thee do return
Thy self, the Flame with which I burn.
My Nothing is my joy; there my delight,
In thy All-being shines most bright.

They are no longer griev'd that they have not satisfied nor suffer'd so much as they ought and deserv'd to suffer; since thereby they leave a spacious Field for the lustre and glory of the Love, Sufferings and infinite Dignity of *Jesus Christ* to display themselves in. They are no longer griev'd that they have no merit of their own, and to see an infinite disproportion between what proceeds from them, and what proceeds from God; since this makes room for the infinite value of the merit of *Jesus Christ* in them, and for the infinite reward which this merit is worthy of. Here you see another true and holy *Imputation* and Application of the *Merit and Satisfaction* of *Jesus Christ*, and an altogether pure and divine sort of discharge from Suffering.

XXXVIII

How all
that is in
Jesus
Christ is
imputed
to his
Saints so
quies
their
Minds
when they
consider
the Ju-
stice of
God.

XXXVIII. I say it again, after that pure and holy Persons have done and suffer'd before God all that they were capable of, yet as they acknowledge themselves to be but of very narrow and finite capacities, and indeed meer nothings; and that God and his Benefits being infinite, the acts & duties which ought to be paid him, are above all our Actions and Passions; we raise our selves above whatever is and can come from us, and from the Creatures to what is in Christ, and in God himself, and is of worth incomprehensible; and finding God gives it us, we take it, and offer it up to him as a present of our own. And by this we find our selves eased of our trouble; knowing that God accepts this graciously, as he does also our implicate Faith, which implicitly takes the infinity, and which God imputes to us as if we had explicitly done and suffer'd all that

is in the infinite Merit of his Son. This holds in all the Actions of the Saints, as in Prayer, Worship and Praises: For their act of praising God, being to their mind too straight, too low, and too cold, they mount up above all their own Essays, and above all the power of Creatures, and of the very Angels, and go to *Jesus Christ* himself, and taking his Prayers, Praises and Acts, they offer them to God as their own, and as worthy God's acceptance; and this God imputes to them for reality, as if they did in very deed Praise God as perfectly as *Jesus Christ* himself. And thus the Saints finding in *Jesus Christ* the perfection of all their Duties, enjoy a perfect Tranquility before the Justice of God.

XXXIX. But what affinity is there between this and the imputation, application, and discharge that *Babel* is for? In *Babel* is the old Man, who acts only out of self-love, and here the new that acts purely from the Love of God. There the Justice of God is dreaded, here 'tis lov'd. There Men are griev'd and sad at the thought of submitting to it, and seeing it manifested and fulfilled in them; here the Affliction is, that it is not sufficiently, and as they could wish, fulfilled in them. There they fly to a *Jesus Christ* without them, who must do and suffer, all that the old *Adam* may be excused doing and suffering, and here they have recourse to *Jesus Christ*, living in the Soul, and possess'd by the Heart; and therefore 'tis they have recourse to him because they think they have not yet done nor suffer'd enough; and because it being not in their power to do it more, tho' they never so much wish it, this great and just desire can no otherwise be satisfied than by the most internal gift of the Actions, Sufferings, and infinite merit of another. There interest and the self-love of the old *Adam* call *Jesus Christ* to help, that they may be dispens'd with for not dying, and may live in ease and pleasure; and here, pure and disinterested Love for the Justice of God, after the Sufferings and Death of the old Man call in *Jesus Christ* to their aid, or rather deeming themselves unworthy of him, dare not ask him, but joyfully receive him, when preventing their desires, he is pleas'd to offer himself; they receive him I say as a relief to the dissatisfied condition they are in for not having done or suffer'd

XXXIX.
That in
Babel
there is
no reason
to comfort
oneself with
this Imputation:
and that
the Imputation
sought in
Babel,
is absurd
and
wicked.

Chap.
VIII.

suffer'd so much as they could have wish'd, there being no other way left them to content the infinite desire they have to suffer and do according to God's Justice, to be subjects which this divine Justice may reward without offending, in his ways of acting, against right and proportion. Finally, there *Jesus Christ*, his Spirit, his Life are, without; or if in Man, 'tis but in Speculation and Fancy, and here *Jesus Christ* his Spirit, his Gifts, his Light, and his Life, are inherently and properly in Man, so that the ground of this sort of *Imputation* is the real inheritance and possession of him that is the source of the thing imputed. Nothing is there imputed, but through the real Communion which they have with the source of the good that is imputed. *If we walk in the Light the Blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth us from all Sin.*

John
1. 7.

* Oecon.
before
the Inca.
ch. IV.
n. 19. &c.

Must it not be confessed when this is well consider'd, that there is as much difference between these two sorts of Imputations as between Heaven and Hell? That the one of these sorts of Imputations, Applications and Discharges is wholly Diabolical, while the other is altogether Divine? 'Tis against this Diabolical discharge that I have formerly * spoken, having affirm'd, that in Consideration of the old Man still alive and animated by self-love, *Jesus Christ* has neither done, nor suffer'd, nor merited any thing by way of discharge, but of engagement. But with regard to the new Man, who in Contemplation of God's Justice, and out of a generous and disinterested Love would be greatly afflicted and sham'd at his not having yet suffer'd enough, and done little or nothing of any value if compar'd with his rewards, it is for the freeing him from such disquiets, torments and shame; that *Jesus Christ* has merited and satisfied. But in Conscience, is this it that as present torments and confounds Men? And have they for the most part so much as ever thought of it, so far are they from being in such a state?

XL. That
it is of
the high-
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cern not

XL. I conclude the important point of Justification, with an Exhortation to all that have not a mind to be lost for ever, to consider seriously of it. 'Tis an Affair of the greatest moment. For Justification, or

to be deceiv'd in this matter: And that the Devil uses all his might to destroy Men by their erring in this point.

the

the persuasion that we are in that state, being attended with peace and quiet of Conscience; if we chance to take for Justification what is not it, we put our selves into a false Peace, and the Conscience falls asleep in a false rest, which is a state of all the most fatal and damnable. And therefore has Satan to damn Men, sent in all Ages legions of false Prophets to preach Justification, deliverance from Sin, and Peace, to the Wicked, to the Servants of Sin, to old and great Sinners, to Men prodigiously corrupted, that are so far from being purified from their Corruption, or desiring to be so, that they do not so much as know what it is. In the time of the *Jews*, there were not a few of these Flatterers, of those that put Pillows under the Elbows of the Wicked, these Cryers of *Peace, Peace*, when there is *no Peace*. God knows whether Christendom might not furnish whole Armies of such, who as *St. Peter* says, *promise others Liberty, tho' they themselves are Servants of Corruption*. Would not one say that *St. John* foresaw that People would be deceiv'd by the belief of a false Justification, since to caution us against it he directs his Speech to us in these memorable and never to be forgotten Words, *My little Children let no Man deceive you. He that does Righteousness is Righteous even as God himself is Righteous*.

Chap.
VIII.

Ezek.

13. 18.

Jer. 8.

11.

1 Pet. 2.

19.

1 John

3. 7.

C H A P.

C H A P. IX.

Of Regeneration, and, by the way, of the
Peace of the Soul.

I. Un-
speakable
Peace of
the Ju-
stified.
Rom. 5.
1.



Phil. 4.
7.

John 16.
20, 22.

BEING justified by Faith we have Peace with God through Jesus Christ our Lord. Great and admirable saying of the great Apostle! a saying little understood and little experienced, and indeed little desir'd, and yet before it there should be nothing but trouble and disquiet in the Hearts of all Men living; for 'till then they have not found again the great and infinite treasure of the Divinity, which they have lost by their Sins, but then they meet with it. 'Tis the first interview between God and Man, the first mutual salute in the Centre of the Heart. The Saints are at a loss for Words to express this Joy: They compare it to a Resurrection from the Dead, and to a surprize, like that of one that was all of a sudden caught up from the Flames of Hell, into the joys and glory of Eternal Life. St. Paul says all, when he assures us that *this Peace of God passes all Understanding*; and Jesus Christ, that it is beyond all that the World can give, *Peace I give and leave unto you: 'Tis my Peace which I give unto you. My Gift is not of the Nature of those the World gives*; (this is what the Original Greek properly signifies:) And when he would give them the strongest Consolation of all in their greatest trouble he promises them this Divine Peace as the greatest Good; *You shall weep and lament, and the World shall rejoice; you shall be sorrowful, but your Sorrow shall be turn'd into Joy: Your Heart shall rejoice, and none shall take away your joy from you.*

It is a common Notion, that Happiness consists in Peace, quiet and content of Mind: This the World talks of and pretends to, yet knows not what it is.
They

They take the Lethargy the Devil throws them into for the true Peace of the Soul. When Satan has made it his Business to lull them asleep with Toys, with barren Notions and persuasions, and by all kinds of Deceits to render them insensible, and when they have themselves studied all ways possible to lay their old Man to rest in his self-love, to extinguish all the remorses of Conscience, and how they may habitually and constantly obtain of themselves testimonies of complacency, of approbation and satisfaction in their state and ways; in a Word, when being insensible of all the strokes of God, nothing affects them but the continual cheats and flatteries which their corrupt Heart and blinded Reason perpetually put upon them, then they fancy themselves in true Peace and solid quiet of Mind; and such is the *Spinosian* Tranquillity, and that of the Philosophick Genius's of our Times, and indeed of the Pious part of the World. But what shall I say?

Surely, Lord, thou didst set them in slippery Places, thou castedst them down into Destruction. How are they brought into Desolation as in a Moment! They are utterly consum'd with Terrors. As a Dream when one awaketh, so O Lord, when thou awakest thou shalt despise their Image. The Divine Peace of the justified Soul differs as much from this as God does from the Devil. 'Tis an infinite Ocean of Bliss, so essential (to use the Expression of the Mysticks) that (as the Saints constantly affirm) one drop alone would be enough to turn a Thousand Hells into so many Paradises. 'Tis what they literally and sensibly feel, who from the Hellish Torments of Purification find them translated by Justification into the Element of Peace. Nor can it be otherwise: For that this Peace is nothing else but the Holy Ghost himself as graciously making himself sensible to a Soul wherein he meets with no hindrance to the Communications of his Love. Now as the least degree of the enjoyment of this great God, exceeds all the realities of Millions of Worlds, were there so many, we may by this make some faint guess, what the Peace of God may be in comparison of that which the World can imagine, can have, give and take away.

Psal. 73.
18. &c.

II. *That the justify'd are assur'd of their being in a state of Grace.* II. These Truths being clear'd, there is no room left to question, whether such as have attain'd to this state, are in assurance and certainty. 'Tis without all doubt. But as the old *Adam* is ready to abuse every thing, and the Devil does all he can to inspire the Children of God with Presumption and Security, it will be convenient, with relation to this certainty, to take along with us the following Precautions.

III. *Precautions in reference to this assurance.* III. First, It must be remember'd, that this Peace and this Certainty belongs only to true Saints, who having undergone a thorough Purification, are justify'd by the declaration which the Holy Ghost makes to them that they are just and pure.

Secondly, It's to be noted, that this Certainty does not directly concern Salvation as future; but it respects the present Grace of God. 'Tis an assurance that the state wherein one then is, is a state of Grace so compleat, that should one dye in it one should immediately enjoy God. God's Spirit brightly dwelling in a pure Soul, which he fills with his Peace, does thereby immediately assure it that the Grace of God, the Fountain of Salvation, God himself, dwells in it; for this Certainty is nothing but the experimental sensation of the Divine Peace and Light. By this a Soul is sure that Sin dwells no more in it, that God dwells there; that as long as God dwells there its Salvation will be certain; and that the Power of God, and of his Grace, is more than sufficient to remove all Impediments that may at any time be cast in its way to Salvation. These things being all really thus in the justify'd Soul, and in the Divine Grace which it possesses, the Spirit of Light does with Ease and Truth discover and manifest them to it. But then it cannot shew unto it things that are not as yet in it, and which being different from the Operations of the Holy Spirit, depend either upon Man, or the World, or the Devil. The World, the Devil and the Flesh, have always the liberty to tempt the Soul, and the Soul all the time of this Life has the liberty to turn towards these Objects or not, and to turn away or not from God, and fall back into the element of inferiour things. A justify'd Soul, as long as it is in this World, is not reputed on the account of its Justification, to have sur-
pished

nished all the acts of Correspondence and Fidelity which it owes to God to its lives end: it is not accounted to have overcome the future Temptations of its Enemies, and to have no more the liberty to consent to their solicitations. For this is not true. Therefore cannot the Holy Spirit make such a manifestation to it. And so, whatever Men may say to flatter themselves, this same Soul cannot be in absolute assurance as to its future Salvation, supposing it has any time longer yet to live in this World. Of this more when I come to speak of Perseverance.

Chap.
IX.

IV. But is not this repugnant to the effect of the Peace and Tranquillity which Justification produces in the Heart? By no means. A Person justify'd is satisfy'd that he has again found his God; and the better to keep him, he would not wish to be assur'd that he cannot lose him, or that he shall not lose him as long as he lives. He is pleas'd with this sollicitude proceeding from Love, being thereby kept from Presumption and Security, and mov'd to put up earnest and continual Prayer to God not to forsake him, but to ever watch over him and assist him; to have a vigilant Eye upon himself and his Duty; is thereby inspir'd with aversion to a World and a Life where he is in such great danger, and with desires to be deliver'd out of it.

IV. Tho' the certainty of Salvation on be not absolute, this does not hinder the Peace of the justify'd.

V. But tho' he have not this certainty of future Salvation, yet he has a lively hope of it, which God produces in him by the new Life which he gives him, and by his Spirit which he possesses: for he knows and sees that God has infinite Power to surmount all the obstacles of Salvation: he knows and sees also that God has an infinite Love for him, witness the Offer of his Grace to him while he was yet his Enemy, and an Enemy to that Grace, and so, on God's part, all is certain; my meaning is, that the justify'd is sure that God on his side will not fail him, nor deny him any thing that is necessary to his salvation. All the reason of fear is founded on the consideration of himself, namely, whether on his part he shall make a good use of God's Gifts, and faithfully answer the design of them. These two things, qualify'd the one by the other, make what we call *Hope*, which the consideration of the Nothingness and Frailty of Man on one

V. How there arises hence in the justify'd a lively hope.

hand

Chap.
IX.



Hand keep in Humility and Trembling, while the consideration of the Power of God's Grace and Love keeps it on the other Hand in holy Elevation and Tranquillity; and which by exercise and advancement under Trials gathers new strength and force daily. And whoever holds this hope firm unto the end finds not himself confounded, whatever cause he may have had to fear on his side, least he should lose his Treasure, and have the shame to see himself depriv'd of it.

VI. A VI. These Truths follow almost Word for Word from that Passage of St. Paul, which we began this Chapter with. After he had said, that Peace attended Justification by Faith, he adds, *that we are brought by this same justifying Faith into the Divine Grace, in which Grace we are steadfast or stand* (being sure and certain that we are in it.) But with relation to the divine Glory or Salvation, *we rejoice in hope of this Glory, notwithstanding we are belet with Afflictions: Because through Patience and Experience, they strengthen and redouble Hope, which maketh not asham'd, when 'tis quicken'd by the Consideration that God has given us his Spirit of Grace and Love, his Son's Omnipotent Spirit of Life. For if when we were Enemies, we were reconcil'd to God by the Death of his Son, which the Spirit of Grace offer'd us, much more being reconcil'd, shall we be Sav'd by the Life of that same Son, dwelling in us with the Father, thro' the Spirit of Power and of Love.* This Chapter of St. Paul may be more particularly consider'd from the first to the Eleventh Verse inclusively. Thus much concerning the Assurance that follows Justification, which is call'd, the certainty of the state of Grace, and the hope of the state of Glory, or of Salvation: which made St. Peter in a transport of Divine Joy, say, *Blessed be God the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has of his great Grace and Mercy begotten us again by the Resurrection of Jesus Christ from the Dead, to put us in a lively Hope of possessing the incorruptible Inheritance, &c.* And the Apostle hence takes occasion afterwards to exhort the Faithful to watch over themselves, and secure themselves by discharging their Duties in all Things, for fear the Devil should devour them, who went about them waiting his Opportunity

1 Pet. 1.
3.

to do it. Doubtless the Devil was not so poorly skill'd in Divinity as to believe that they that had true Faith could not Perish: Otherwise he would have been very foolish to walk up and down so to no purpose. He has too much Wit to be so continually making such foolish Experiments, did he not know both in Theory and Fact, from the final falls of the Justified and Regenerate, which he has been the cause of, that they may Perish as long as they are upon the Earth.

Chap.
IX.

VII. It must be moreover observ'd, that what has been said of the assurance of the state of Grace one is in, is to be understood not without some restriction. Which is that one justified, who in consequence of his Justification sees himself with certainty in a state of Grace, yet has not constantly the actual Knowledge of this certainty; and that now and then there are seasons wherein he knows not himself. God suffers it to be so in the Paroxysm of Temptations, as I may say, that Man may be sensible, and see that of himself he is always nothing; that he may grow strong in the Faith of pure Submission and Resignation; that he may be refin'd as it were, and perfected in the pure Will of God; and that by an unshaken Correspondence and Fidelity in these obscurities and drinesses, he may still more and more fit himself for higher rewards.

VII.
The Justified has not always the actual sense of this Assurance.

VIII. The state which follows that of Justification (whereof we have seen three of the principal effects, Peace, Assurance of the state of Grace, and a lively hope of Salvation) the state I say that immediately follows it is Regeneration or Renovation, or the Spiritual Resurrection: 'Tis by it we become and are Christians indeed. Before this we were but Candidates, or Christians in name and desire, which is not enough to give us right and title to that glorious Name in the sight of God and in Truth.

VIII.
Justification is follow'd by Regeneration, whereby we are made Christians, that before

were but Catechumens.

IX. To avoid being deceiv'd by the double meaning of a Word, please to note, that when by Regeneration,

IX. *Two Senses of Regene-*

ration: In which here taken

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Chap.
IX.

the whole process by which the new Creature is form'd gradually, is understood, in this Sense it proceeds Justification: For then it is a work that is like the forming the Child in the Mother's Womb, that is begun, fashion'd, and finish'd before it is Born, and comes into the World as a perfect Creature: But when Regeneration is taken in its most strict sense for the spiritual Birth, and the bringing forth of a new Creature already form'd in *Jesus Christ*, as I here understand it, then it follows Purification and Justification.

X. The
Description of a
Regenerate Per-
son.

X. Whosoever is purified and justified by the Holy Ghost, is an altogether new and wonderful Creature, and is the delight of God himself. 'Tis unknown to the World. It lives not there. It has no inclination to Evil. The Spirit of God is its sole principle and mover, which makes in it all things new. The whole tendency of its desires is towards God, for 'tis God's Spirit that excites them. Then 'tis one begins to pray aright, and to make Prayers that are always pleasing to God, and are always heard. The Understanding becomes wholly new: Then one sees clearly in the Kingdom of God, and with certainty judges and sees that all that talk of it out of this state, talk of it as the Blind do of Colours, how rational and probable soever their Discourse may be. Such a one judges of them with certainty, but cannot be judged by these strangers, to whom the actions, the thoughts, the discourses most high and divine of the Saints, are riddles, jargon and cant, which they no more understand than Beasts or Statues. These Divine Regenerate Souls know that the Inspirations, Communications, and divine Conversations of the Holy Ghost, are not Graces confin'd to the Prophets and Apostles of former times; but that they are gifts common to all those that having crucified their old Man, are come to the new Birth in that Spirit that is no stock or stone, void of all force and effect, dull and sleepy; but is a most penetrating and all-powerful Principle, an infinite Fountain of infinite Light and infinite Strength, that worketh infinite Things in a Will that is resign'd up to him, and who there acts like a God that is the enlightener, mover, and finisher of all in all. As this Spirit fills their Understandings with divine Light, so is he in their Hearts, a
spring

spring of divine Love, Joy, Peace, Goodness, and of all kinds of Vertues, which are so perfectly the element of these Souls, that their first Bias and their first Motions tend always towards God and Vertue, out of which they are not able to Breathe.

Chap.
IX.

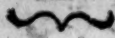
XI. Who can describe the qualities and excellencies of these Divine Souls, of which God himself is an Admirer, and whose Heart is ravish'd with their Beauty? For this we must consult the Mysticks who have writ thereof in the Divine Light, and were themselves of the number of these Divine Souls. If to some they speak a strange Language, it is to the Doctors of the World, who have a Doctrine of the World, and Hearers of the World; but these being of God, they that are not of God cannot hear them. But such as are of God, and even those that sincerely desire to be so, know very well how true it is that the truly regenerate, amongst infinite other of their wonderful pre-eminencies, have communion with God; that God teaches them all that is needful to be known both as to their spiritual and temporal concerns, in general and special, when they repair to him in the sanctuary of their Hearts; that 'tis they only that understand the Truth of the Divine Scriptures and of true Divinity, without the help of Study, Languages and Logick, and the like trumpery; that they are inclin'd to all Good, and averse to all Evil; that Righteousness, Vertue, and whatever is divine, are easier, pleasanter and more natural (as I may say) to them, than Evil is to the Wicked; that they do Good with joy and alacrity, and naturally, by the Principle of the Divine Nature into which they are again born; and that they need neither Law nor Commandment: Finally, there is nothing in them to be condemn'd; their Passions are all Love, their Anger is pure Goodness, pure Justice, pure Charity, much preferable to the Flatteries of the Worldly.

XI. Continuation of the Description of one Regenerate. Cant. 4. 9. 1 John 4. 5, 6.

*Let me the Righteous sharply chide,
I shall it Kindness deem,
And his Reproofs a healing Balm
For all my Wounds esteem.*

Psal.
141. 5.

Chap.
IX.



I shall say no more of them, but that they are the Pillars and Salt of the Earth, though generally they are look'd upon as the scum of the World, as dangerous Fools, seduc'd, fanatical, mad, whimsical, melancholy Wretches, with abundance more of the like honourable Appellations the Devil is pleas'd to bestow on them. But God will one day make it known, that what was done to them was done to the Apple of his Eye, and that they that rejected them have rejected God himself, and that to hear them has been to hear God. O what a Happiness is it ever to have known any such! I partly know what it is; 'tis an advantage that in truth I would not change for all the World.

XII. All
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ly so.

XII. Yet my meaning is not to make a general, much less a reciprocal Proposition of this; that is, I do not say that the true Regenerate are always, and by all, thus treated, nor that all that are thus treated are truly regenerate, tho' they perswade themselves they are. Pride, Self-love, and a good dose of Folly or Presumption, make many fancy themselves such, who yet oftentimes have not so much as made one step in the way of Purification, so far are they from having gone through those terrible and rough Tryals, yet 'till then, 'tis dangerous singing victory, tho' some considerable progress hath been already made therein.

XIII.
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teaching
and re-
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the World and making Divisions.

XIII. The state of *Regeneration* is a mighty matter, many here sing Triumph before the Victory, and indeed before the Fight. How many having, it may be, receiv'd some divine Ray that call'd them, and many times only some glimmering Light of Human Reason, have presently upon this, fancied themselves mightily enlighten'd People, and Regenerate in the Light, and then found themselves moved to diffuse these dawnings upon those they look'd upon to be in Darkness: Which they did with a ground of Heart and Spirit still all defil'd, corrupt and spoil'd, whereby good and evil were confounded together, the pure mixt with the impure, and all put in disorder and confusion instead of redressing things, and reforming the World. I will suppose they were such as meant well, that in many things they had more rational Conceptions than others, and that

they

they had also some divine Lights, and that they had in some measure begun to purify themselves of the Vices and Imperfections they knew to be in themselves, or in things External. But what will be the end of all this, if not waiting in quiet and patience the coming of the Holy Ghost to cleanse and sanctify the ground of their Hearts by the most inward Purification, and then to enlighten them purely, and to inspire and move them, they desperately run up and down, a gathering People about them, to reform and enlighten them? What can one do in such a state, how well soever we may design and how great soever our probity may be, but stop the course of God's Operation in us, mix Darknes, a Thousand evil Impressions that still remain in us, our own Passions, fleshly Wisdom, human and corrupt Reason, with all we say, and with all we do? And what shall then hinder the root of self-love, of presumption, of pride, of sins yet alive in their root, from getting again the upperhand, and making way for the Devil to be Master both of the Reformation and Reformers? What I say is levell'd against no one in particular: But this truth in general is what none can deny: Since amongst the swarms of Sects that pretend to Reformation, even to the Pestilent Sect of *Socinians* (which is a rank Hellish Poison) there is not a Man but judges all the Reformations differing from his own, to have been made in this Spirit, take them at the best.

XIV. I say take them at the best: For there are indeed some, of which it cannot be said that they were begun by such as had any Rays of divine Light, or the least good design for God, much less were Regenerate in the Light of the Holy Ghost. The *Socinians*, for Example, and those that deny that God Operates immediately, and by himself in Souls, and that he produces in them by his Grace, holy Lights and Inspirations, and a divine Conversation: It is plain, that the Reformers and Regenerate of this Kidney, were wretchedly Blind, and deplorably sunk in the mire of their inward Filthiness and Darknes, without the least grain of sincere and good Will for the true glory and for the works of the living and holy God, whose Grace and Energy, with the Truth of his most glorious, most

XIV. A
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Chap. IX. wonderful and most saving Operations they have industriously labour'd to lessen.

XV. Others there were who in opposition to these, acknowledg'd the necessity and truth of the Operations of God's Grace, and that it is it that produces in the Soul all the good Thoughts, the light of Faith, the Vertues and all good Motions: But when they had to do with such as were truly Regenerate, or consider'd themselves with comparison to those that had the Holy Spirit, that receiv'd from him divine Inspirations, and were immediately taught by his divine Light, and by his divine Voice in their Hearts, and led by his supernatural all-holy and pure Motions; then being conscious that they had nothing of all this in themselves, and yet being willing to maintain their post and their pretended Regeneration, they by a ridiculous contradiction sell a denying the true consequences and effects of Regeneration, scoff'd at the Operations of the Holy Spirit, at his individual Inspirations, at his divine and inward Instruction, and would have all this pass for Fanaticism and Enthusiasm. Shameful contradiction! For these are the very Persons that at other times say, that Man of himself can have no good Thought, no good Motion of any kind whatever; and when they think not of it, glory in being Temples of the Holy Ghost, and those in whom the Holy Ghost Prayeth, assureth them of their Adoption, teacheth them by his Unction, openeth their Eyes that they may see the wondrous things of his Law, &c. This is what they say: But then to come off again, this shall be understood in time and place, after the manner of the old Adam: They are for Illuminations, Inspirations and Motions Divine; in a word, for Operations Divine, after the fashion of the old Man; works of corrupt Reason, of the Letter and of human and carnal Wisdom. And to this they give the sacred Name of Operation of the Holy Ghost, while they do indeed deny the reality thereof by opposing what is really such in the true Regenerate.

XVI. There are others who to avoid running thus counter to their own Principles, and who as we may
Delusions of Fanatics that take their own wild Imaginations for the moving of the Holy Ghost.
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believe, having first receiv'd some divine Rays of Light, and some good Inspirations, presently came abroad, not staying the progress and finishing of their Purification, nor the full time of the true New-birth, gave themselves out for Regenerate, for Inspir'd, and for Persons that were enlighten'd and immediately guided by the Holy Ghost; which being altogether false, and yet by no means to be beat out of them, has fill'd their Mind with a presumptuous, obstinate and fantastical Folly, that has made them believe they were truly Regenerate in the Holy Ghost, and take all their foolish Fancies, suggested by their Corruption, and sometimes by the Devil, for divine Inspirations; tho' they were often nothing but pure Extravagancies visible to all the World.

This is the Character and Original of the Reformation of the *Quakers*, and of the apish Tricks of a number of false Prophets that have ever appear'd in the World, tho' indeed it must be confess'd there were many of them whose beginnings were not so good, but were purely either Diabolical or Fanatical, or effects of Melancholy. But be that as it will, Men should take heed, while they are Unregenerate, how they imitate all the Actions of one Regenerate. It may then be very well said, *duo cum faciunt idem non est idem*: Two Persons doing the same thing do not the same thing: For one acts by the Principle of the Holy Ghost, the other, by the whimsical Motions of his own disorder'd Imagination; and so the one does well, and the other sins against God.

XVII. There is nothing more rare than a Person truly come up to the fulness of the second Birth, and really Born in the Holy Ghost and of God: But they are still more rare, who being born of God, are by him moved and excited to call others thereto, to reach and govern them, and to become their Spiritual Fathers or Mothers, by the new Birth they are to procure for them according to (the will of) God. Such are now-a-days in my Opinion more rare than *Phoenix's*, nor can one tell where to meet with them. Heretofore, I knew but one such, who being herself a perfect new Creature had a divine vocation and mission to call Men to God, and to make the Children of

XVII.
Rarity of
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Chap.

IX.

Jesus Christ by her wonderful Lights. Whoſo does not underſtand my meaning here, may look back to the Preface of the foregoing Treatiſe.

XVIII.

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that pre-
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judge of
them.*

XVIII. If at preſent there be any that are ſimply Regenerate as to their own particular (and not as yet call'd by God to the Miniſtry of others) 'tis what is very much to be wiſh'd; and 'tis to be hop'd in time that God will raiſe up ſome of them, that are, it may be, hidden at preſent, as the good were in the Days of *Elias*: For the Spirit of God that blows where it liſts, brings forth, governs and commonly hides his Children in Solitudes and Places remote from Men, eſpecially when the Corruption of the World is Universal. Nor are we to heed the blind preſumption of the Men of theſe Times that will needs be giving Laws to God, and to his Servants, forbidding to live in Solitude, commanding this and prohibiting t'other Thing; magiſterially dictating rules of their Behaviour, and pretending to adviſe them in every thing. Raſh and Senſleſs as they are! 'Tis as if blind Malefactors, thrown into Dungeons, ſhould pretend to ſee themſelves on the Bench, and judge their Judges, and to preſcribe ways to thoſe that ſee clearly and are ſurrounded with Light. Sure 'tis well done of the Animal Man to judge of the Spiritual, of his Carriage, and of things Divine! Knows he not from the Letter of Scripture, that all this ought to ſeem Fooliſhneſs to him, tho' it be indeed the Wiſdom of God.

XIX.

*Doctors
of the
World.*

XIX. Examine now who will in the Divine Light by the Principles and Ways I have been laying down, the Buſineſs of I know not how many Legions of Teachers that have at preſent overflown *Chriſtendom* as a Deluge; how many of them there are that have arriv'd by the ſole and only ſolid ways of Faith and real Purification to the New-birth of the Spirit, and thence to the pure and abundant Illuminations of his Union, which is the true School and Univerſity where we commence true Doctors of Chriſtianity, true Shepherds and Spiritual Fathers, true Meſſengers and Miniſters of God; and it will be ſeen, how near or how far we are off from the fulfilling of that Saying: Let them alone; they are blind leaders of the blind; and if the blind lead the blind, they ſhall both fall into the Diſh.

Mat. 15.
14.

Let

Let us then leave them and return to the Saints, and those that are good, the subject of our present Discourse.

Chap.
IX.

XX. The sort of Regenerate Persons last mentioned, that were chosen of God to be Fathers in the Spiritual (World) were not taken out of the form of little Children, or of Youths, but out of that of the full grown and strong in *Christ*. For as in Nature, so in Grace, Children are incapable of multiplying their kind. Now as those that come into the World by a natural Birth pass through divers Degrees of Age and Strength, and have accordingly different Degrees of Gifts and Talents; so is it with those that are born of the Spirit into the Kingdom of God. It may be said in general that they are either new born Babes, as St. Peter calls them; or Youths or young Men, as the beloved Disciple styles them, or Men and of full Age in *Christ*.

XX. Three
sorts of
Regene-
rate Per-
sons: lit-
tle Chil-
dren,
Youths,
and full
grown.

XXI. The first have but small Experience as yet in the new ways of the Spirit, and may be surpris'd therein, and slip and fall. The Second are of better Proof, more grown and stronger: The Third are perfect Men, and that walk ordinarily without stumbling in the ways of the Lord. Ordinarily I say; for it sometimes happens that they fall, and that mortally, and perish if they will; for there are dangers in this World, and that in the Trials to which God exposes them to encrease their Merit and Rewards, and for the more illustrious manifestation of his Gifts in them.

1 Pet. 2.
2.
1 John
2. 13.
XXI.
Their dif-
ferences.

XXII. Moreover, though the Regenerate, in what state soever they may be, whether of Infancy, Youth or Manhood, are new and admirable Creatures, yet is it self-evident, that the higher the Degree is to which they are arriv'd, the greater also are God's wonders in them, and are indeed so great, that in those that are perfectest, they exceed all human belief. The singularities of God's Communion with them, and of the Saints among themselves, and with the other Creatures, are of a kind so unknown to the World, and so contrary to the Thoughts of Men, that they would look all like Fable and Folly to the most refin'd Wits of the World, had it been God's Will they should have been acquainted with them. He that has all Power in

XXII. The
works of
God in
them
wonder-
ful,

Chap.
IX.



Heaven and in Earth, in whom all is united and living, and who lives in his Saints, does in them marvellous things. The Holy Scriptures, the Lives of the Fathers, and of Saints that are not suspected, give us some little Samples thereof, which as wonderful as they are, are little or nothing in comparison of the whole and real Truth. Yet must we beware of Impostors that will Diabolically be counterfeiting the true Miracles of the Saints, as Hypocrites imitate outwardly their Regeneration by Grimaces, which are sometimes easily, sometimes hardly to be distinguish'd.

XXIII.
*Why God
does not
instantly
take the
Regene-
rate out
of the
world
whenever
there are
any such.*

XXIII. I design not to enlarge upon the Trials to which the true Regenerate are expos'd from the time of their New Birth. Only I shall answer a Question that may be ask'd; since these are fit and meet to enjoy Eternal Life, why God does not immediately take them to himself, and not leave them any longer in so wretched and dangerous a Life as this earthly one is, where they are not only still kept out of Paradise, but are also in danger of making Shipwrack of their Salvation? To which 'tis answered; First, That there is absurdity in this Question, whereby it is pretended, that God should shorten Mens Lives, and offer violence to the course of Nature, and continually change it because these Persons were Regenerate; whereas on the contrary it should rather follow from thence, that it was God's part to preserve their Life, and to keep all that belong'd to them in Nature in good State, God being no destroyer but a preserver of Nature; Secondly, God does the rather preserve them alive, that by living they may be confirm'd in Vertue, encrease their Perfection, and make themselves worthy of greater Glory and Rewards, may be fruitful in good works for the Glory of God, and because they are of use for the converting and edifying Sinners, for the instructing and comforting the good that are yet in the way of Purification, or intend perfectly to enter therein. Add to this, that God is never wanting on his part to supply his Saints liberally with all the Graces that are needful for their continual growth in all that is good, and for their surmounting all obstacles and dangers that might lett them in their course towards him; so that it must be purely by their own voluntary and inexcusable

able Negligence if ever they fall mortally. I know very well this last Proposition is by some questioned; but 'tis only through Error and Ignorance of what God is that they do it. I think I have elsewhere said the Substance of what is necessary for the Support of this Truth, which the Example of St. Peter, to whom they say God's Grace was wanting, ought not to make us doubt of: For it is false that God's Grace was wanting to St. Peter, but it was Peter that was wanting to the Grace of God, which was ever present with him; but to which his voluntary Distractions, and the too good Opinion of his own sufficiency hindered him from corresponding.

Chap.
IX.

*Oeconomy
of sin, c.
ii and iii.*

XXIV. Observe we then the following Similitude.

XXIV.

Process of a Regenerate Person explain'd by the Similitude of a

*The Pro-
Plant.*

A Grain of Seed, or a Kernel, is sown in the ground to grow up again. And what follows? It must putrify before it springs up again. While it is putrifying it gets a Principle of New Life. When it has done putrifying we find it immediately springing up and form'd into a perfect Plant. But yet there is mighty difference between this tender Plant, hid still under the Earth, and a little Tree full of Blossoms, or which is much more, a great Tree laden with Fruit. Now should we be for removing this little Plant under pretence that it is alive, and that there would be hazard in leaving it in the Garden where it stands, this would not only hinder its full growth and fruitfulness, but to make of a Nursery or Garden, a meer Wilderness, by taking out of it both this and all the other Plants upon pretence that they are alive, and that we will remove them into an inclosure where they shall be out of all Danger? The Earth would become a Desert or a Hell, and not have one heavenly Plant in it, if God were oblig'd for such Reasons as these to take the Saints out of it. It is therefore just and good, that these Plants remain there. And what do they while they are still there? They are a considerable time under ground cover'd with Earth and Dung; but as soon as they weakly shout out of the Earth, what must they not endure before they come to be a strong Tree and loaded

Chap.
IX.

loaded with Fruit? Cold and Heat, Wind and Storms, Vermin and Beasts, Drought, and a thousand Injuries from the unseasonableness of the Weather, is what they must frequently expect to meet with, and by them to have their Verdure, Flowers, Fruits, Branches, and sometimes the very Body of the Plant taken off and destroyed. But withal when it has stood out all their Oppositions, a Tree charg'd with fine Fruit is the Beauty of the Garden, the Delight of its Master, and the Food of Men, and a living Principle, whence thousands more may be rais'd. This is all applicable to one that desires to be born anew in God, and to become a Divine Plant. After the Putrefaction and Death of his old *Adam* in Purification, when he is born again in the new Life, he passes through as many different States and hazards before he comes to be a strong and fruitful Tree in the House of God; but God takes a particular care of him, and helps him to get clear of all his Enemies.

Some Difficulties with Relation to the State of the Regenerate.

XXV.
Difficulties about
the State
of the

XXV. Come we now to some difficulties that may be rais'd from several things that have been said of those that are Regenerate.

(1.) Whether the Regenerate have no evil Motions, &c.

Rom. 7.
19.

2 Cor.
2. 7.

(1.) First, It will be said, were it true that all the Inclinations and very first Motions of the Regenerate tended always towards good, it would thence follow, that the Regenerate would have no Concupiscence, and if so, would have nothing to strive against or resist. What will become then of all those places of Scripture that are directed to the most Regenerate, and exhort them still to fight against the World, the Devil, the Flesh and Sin? Does not St. Paul say of himself, *That the good which he would he does not, and the evil which he would not do, that he does?* Was it not necessary to keep him from Pride for God to send an Angel of Satan to humble him? Now to what purpose

pose was all this, what need was there of fighting and guarding against no Enemy? Chap. IX.

I answer, they that make this Objection do hand over head confound things that are very distinct, and by all means should be so kept. After God has with so much pains separated the darkness from the light in a Soul, and the darkness is past, we should not on pretence of some places of Scripture, which the Passions of the old *Adam* are glad to find and shelter themselves under, we should not I say, mix them again, and mischievously endeavour to spoil and confound the holy work of God out of a secret spite to see that we are not so pure ourselves, and yet would fain be thought to be in a state of Regeneration.

XXVI. To clear up these mists which the Spirit of Darknes and confusion would fain cast over the work of God, mark we well the following comparison. XXVI. A
Simili-
rude
whersin

is shewn the true state of Man and of one Regenerate.

Let us imagine a Prince that gives to one (of his Subjects) the Government of a Province that is in a very good condition; the Frontiers so well guarded that the Enemy cannot enter, the Garrison strong and well provided; the Suburbs and Country in Peace and Plenty. This Man instead of making it his business to look after his Government, grows negligent, suffers his Enemy to pass the Frontiers, who comes under a shew of Friendship, and is at last brought into the very Castle. Now is he a Slave and lost, he and his Province, that were before free. Now the Enemy takes off the Mask, and easily makes himself Master of all; claps this slothful Governour in Chains, and throws him into Prison, forces him to obey his Orders, and compells all in the Castle to submit to his Usurpation, abrogates the Laws of the Prince, and makes new ones of his own, and so forth. Then let us conceive that the Prince of this careless Governour finding that it was more out of Imprudence than Malice that he fell into this Misfortune, touch'd with compassion towards him, sends him secretly Arms and Forces to break his Chains and recover his Liberty. He, if he be not an Unnatural Traytor, will highly value and carefully use this golden

Chap.
IX.

den Opportunity put into his Hands by the gracious Goodness of his Prince, will detest his own Fault, abhor the Yoke and Laws of his Enemy, and relying on the continual and sufficient help which his Prince sends him, and promises to send him privately as he shall stand in need, he openly rises against his Enemy, and declares a Civil War against him in the very Heart of his Capital. Here are now two Factions up in Arms; one to recover the Place and drive out the Usurper, the other to keep still Possession. They draw out, fight, retreat, sometimes one way, sometimes another; now one part of the Place is for one, then for t'other. Nothing to be seen but various turns. To Day one has the better, to morrow the other; here the one keeps for a while the Laws of the Prince, there those of the Enemy; to morrow all is chang'd. But this Officer still taking Courage, and receiving constantly by secret ways new Reinforcements, does at last carry the day, makes the Enemy scamper over the Walls, and entirely clears his Fortrefs. And now commences a new Period. From this time the Yoke of the Usurper is entirely shook of; the Seat of the War is no longer in the Bowels of the Province, all at home is in profound Peace, the Enemy being beaten out of the Fort. There the Laws of the Tyrant are repeal'd, and those of the lawful Prince restor'd to their due Force; they are there observ'd with Joy, and all the Inclinations of the Subjects tend solely to Loyalty to their Sovereign, whose Will is then their Delight, as that of their former Enemy is their Abhorrence. Yet the Enemy still keeps abroad, and has not quitted the Country, is still in the Outworks, and uses all his Artifices to perswade the City to a surrender, sometimes he endeavours to carry it by Storm. He besieges, annoys it, fires upon it, grievously harasses it, and this is what there is no hindring from doing. But what of all this? Does this hinder but that it is still true, that the Enemy is no longer in the Fort, is no longer obey'd, that there is no longer any intestine War with him, that all is quiet within, that there is no longer any Inclination in the Inhabicants to obey the Tyrant, but only to the Allegiance due to the lawful Prince. All this is undoubtedly true. Yet must the Governour of the Place

Chap.

IX.

Place still be at War, take Courage, and stand upon his Guard, and oppose the Enemy, for fear he loses all again. He must not listen to his Offers; must fight when attack'd, and be watchful to extinguish his Fires; must run hither and thither, and with great Precaution make all necessary Provisions; otherwise, if once he grow remiss, he is inevitably ruin'd. Now if this same Officer be but a Novice in Government, if he be little vers'd and us'd to it, he will no question sometimes be guilty of a false step; not purposely and knowingly, nor against the Commands of his Prince, nor the Allegiance he owes him; but by Surprise, Ignorance, a too suddain and precipitate Zeal, and want of Skill; but with a perfectly loyal Heart, ever aiming at higher Attainments, and turning his very Faults into Preservatives against all Relapses for the future; and becoming more expert and vigilant than otherwise he would have been. His Prince might indeed absolutely deliver him out of all these Troubles, if by his uncontrollable Power he were pleas'd to change the Face of Affairs, and to come upon the Enemy and drive him from the Outworks, from the Country, and even from off the whole Earth. But besides that it is not yet seasonable to make such mighty Efforts, he considers, that the first so profound Peace, prov'd fatal to his Vassal, who thence took occasion to give himself up to sloth and negligence; and that it is for his good and safety to leave him for a while in these Labours and Alarms, to accomplish him in his Duty and Allegiance. After this, will come the time of perfect Freedom, of outward Deliverance, as well as of inward. Then shall there be no more Enemies at all; and the Prince will come with all his Delights and with all his Glory, to crown the Fidelity of his Subject, nay, to adopt him his Son, and make him his Associate in the Government. Then shall all be compleat and quiet, without as well as within.

XXVII. And here you have my Parable. Possibly there is no need of making the Application, it being easy for every one to do it for themselves: I think so too; but since every one can and ought to do it (if he

XXVII.
Applica-
tion of
this Simi-
litude to

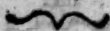
the matter in hand, worth your noting.
means

Chap. means to come to the knowledge of the Subject before us) I'll try to do it here too as well as another.
IX.

This Similitude sets forth naturally enough the whole Process of Man from his Creation to his Glorification. This Sovereign Prince is God; who when he had created Man, trusted him with the Direction and Government of a Province; and this Province is Man himself, in whom there are several sorts of insides and outsides. The Heart, the Desire, Love, Consent, the bottom of the Soul, are the Castle and capital City: The Imagination, the Senses and Body, are the Suburbs and Outworks Man is compos'd off: The Enemy is the Devil, who before Man's Fall had liberty to beat about the Frontiers; That is about external Objects; but pass them he could not, no not so much as to enter into the Country nor Suburbs; my meaning is, the Devil had no power over the Flesh, the Senses, the Complexion, or Imagination of Man; nor indeed to corrupt the external Objects, or employ in his Attempts on Man's Exterieur, much less could he make himself Master of his Interiour. And this is one of Man's first Periods. But Man basely having yielded up all his right to him, the Enemy laid waste, his Frontiers, invaded his Flesh, Senses and Imaginations, and mov'd them both immediately by himself and by the means of Objects, as he pleas'd; and which is more, he made himself Master of the Heart, Inclinations, Desires, and of the whole Interiour of Man, where he set up his own Laws, and abolish'd those of God, and where in a word he reigns and tyrannizes at Pleasure. This is Man's Fall and Captivity, and his Second Period. In this State Man can do nothing but evil, and be wholly usefess to any thing that is good, till God of pure Mercy not regarding his Fault, and intending to pardon it, does by his Divine Grace offer him the means to recover himself out of his Slavery and Misery, provided Man by a villainous and inexcusable Treachery, be not wanting in his Correspondence thereto. Let us suppose him to correspond. Here then is War declar'd in Man's Heart, and in the deep of his Soul. He is willing to turn away his Desire, his Inclinations, his Love, his Understanding, his Heart, from the Yoke the

the Devil has put upon them, and from the Thoughts which he has given them; he stirs them up to a Revolt against the Devil in the strong-hold of the Heart, which the Enemy is yet in Possession of. *Satan* no doubt, who has habitually made himself master thereof, and who having given a Thousand Oblique Folds to all the Faculties of the Soul, has hold of these Obliquities, will not fail to defend himself, and to attack with his Veterane and Experienc'd Troops the weak and new rais'd desires that begin to spring up in Man. Then appears the strength of the Devil, and the greatness of the Enmity against God, who secretly furnishes Man with Divine Forces to make head against the Enemy; but in a very lamentable Condition. Man sees part of his Desires, his Inclinations and Propensions and Affections, and almost all side with the Devil and Corruption, and thereupon sighs; to these he opposes other weak and interrupted Desires which he excites in himself with labour, and as 'twere by Force and Violence, whereas almost all his other Inclinations go of themselves without any pain, nay, with Pleasure, toward the Element and Party of the Devil, which is Corruption. Sometimes he thinks he gets a little ground; by and by all is lost, and Man is reduc'd to the last extremity. God inspires him with new Courage; he begins afresh; he pursues, he flies; attacks and is attack'd; he falls and he rises again. Vice and Virtue, Life and Death, Heaven and Hell are grappling in the innermost ground of his Soul. Here all begins to submit to God; there all turns to the Enemy; this changes; on a sudden all inclines towards God, and a Minute after all recoils towards Corruption again, till at length, after many conflicts and fresh Succours, the Grace of God gets the Victory, forces the Enemy over the Wall, drives, from the bottom of the Soul and the centre of the Heart, the Devil and all evil Inclinations, all Desire, Love and Affection that is not of God, and that tends not to God. And in this stands Purification. Here Man receives assurances from God, that the place is recovered, and his, and that he no longer looks upon it as against him; in this stands Justification, which is follow'd by Songs of Victory, and publick Declaration, that there is no Enemy now in the Heart

Chap.
IX.



of Man to fight with: And this is the inward Peace. There the Laws of God are renew'd and meet with no opposition, but are obey'd with Pleasure: All the propensions and first motions of the Heart tend to Good, and never more to Evil; Concupiscence is no more in the Heart, nothing is there but a holy Desire to please God and to do his Will, which is executed with Fidelity and Delight, after a manner altogether new and opposite to that of bondage, in which we liv'd while the Enemy was still in the place. And herein lies true Regeneration: Thus it may, but no other way can, be attain'd: Flatter and Deceive himself who will; but to his own eternal Loss.

XXVIII.

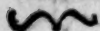
*How the
Regene-
rate are
to fight a-
gainst the
World,
the Flesh,
and the
Devil.*

XXVIII. And upon this account it was that the fore-mention'd Objection was started, about the Concupiscence, the combats and vigilance of the Regenerate. But by this time it is clear that the difficulty is vanish'd, and that what was alledg'd as inconsistent with the Truths by us propos'd, agrees very well with them. Nothing hinders but it may be true, that there is no Concupiscence in the Heart of a Regenerate Person, that not so much as one ill desire arises from the bottom of his Soul; that his interior, its tendencies, its inclinations and affections are at Peace with God, and become a Fountain of Life; and yet that his imaginations, sensibility, his Flesh and the Objects of them may be an outward Court and Field haunted by the Devil, and still of Service in his attacks upon the Soul; But these attacks are all from without, by which he endeavours to force his way into the Heart. And 'tis in these Fights and in these Wars against the outward, against the Flesh, the World, and the Devil, that the Regenerate Soul is to use all diligence, and courageously to maintain her Ground, or else she is a second time lost. For the Enemy suggests frequently to the imagination ill things, thoughts of greatness and glory, of Plenty and Luxury, of Pleasure and Satisfaction; and if they are hearken'd to, then does the Enemy re-enter; but if rejected with Indignation, there is no Sin committed; on the contrary, the Soul thereby becomes more pleasing to God. And so the Flesh in the Regenerate is dull and heavy, ever of itself leaning towards its own accommodation and gratification: 'Tis certain
it

it has a repugnance to Labour and Pain; and could willingly indulge itself in Sloth, rest, ease, delights, plenty, soft usage, pleasure, and the finest of every thing: the corrupt Objects of the World, and of Sense, strengthen these Inclinations: And the Devil has yet access to the Corruption that is in all this: Not one, tho' never so Holy and Regenerate, is during this Life, absolutely free from this. And therefore every Regenerate Person must as long as he lives ever be a Fighting against these Enemies without, the World, the Devil, and his own Flesh and Sensibility; or at least must ever be in readiness to Fight against them whatever intermission these Enemies may seem to give the Soul: For indeed, it sometimes comes to pass, that when the Soul is very strong in God and has brought its Flesh into Subjection, its Enemies dare no more actually assault it; and such Saints there have been, that have liv'd it may be Twenty or Thirty Years without the least Temptation: For when the Devil sees a Soul strong and watchful, he saves himself the trouble and shame to assault it to no purpose.

But for all this he does not lose sight of it; he stands always at the Door: He always actually besieges it, tho' he be not always attacking it: But should he find the Soul never so little heedless, and off her guard, he would immediately assault it to carry the place; and would effectually do it, if the Soul would be negligent (as by its liberty it may) and would give Ear to his Suggestions, and to those of the World, and to the Inclinations of its own Senses and mortal Body, which, as mortified as it may have been, is never so dead, but it may live again to Corruption and give itself up to its Pleasures, if the Soul keeps not a watchful Eye over it, and refrain its Appetites, not regarding what it would have, but only what Justice and Equity require as necessary for its Subsistence. And as in War we see 'tis common to burn the Out-works of a place where the Enemy is too strongly lodg'd: So have the Saints commonly treated their Body with great rigour, and have sapt and macerated it with a holy Zeal, for fear the Devil should fix himself there: For that is usually

Chap. his Rendezvous and Nest, when he has been driven
IX. out of the sanctified Heart.



However that be, 'tis the part of all Regenerate Souls to have a vigilant Eye upon their whole exterior, least through that the Devil enter into their Hearts; so far therefore are the Exhortations of Scripture, to watch and to fight, from not belonging to them; that on the contrary they need more especially to do it: For the Devil watches them more narrowly than he does others. Tho' quiet within, they are encompass'd without on all sides with raging and cruel Enemies, that like Lions Whelps, lurking in their Dens, lie in wait for the Soul, to devour it in its Pilgrimage of this Life when it never so little neglects its guard; and like Murtherers, close her in on every side, ready to cut her Throat, when they in the least perceive she grows remiss, and neglects to use and employ the spiritual Armor which she ought always to have about her. This Life is the Enemies Country. 'Tis only after they have quited this mortal Body and this corrupt World that the Saints are in full assurance, and have

Mat. 26. no more War nor Enemies. *Watch therefore and Pray*
41. *that ye enter not into Temptation: For the Spirit is willing but the Flesh is Weak.*

XXIX.
The Regenerate
Sin no
more.

XXIX. But, some will still say, either to raise a second Difficulty, or further to urge the first, and press the consequences of our answer, can it possibly be that a Soul truly Regenerate may be so pure, as not to have in its Heart so much as one evil Inclination, to have no concupiscence nor evil Desires, and that it may and ought to keep itself in this state, even to Death? Were it so, a Man might then live here without Sin, and might be impeccable: But is not this against Scripture and Experience?

Answer. Yes indeed impeccability, or an incapability of Sinning, is both against Scripture and Experience: But I am far from maintaining any such Doctrine of Security; seeing on the contrary, I do assert, that there is no Justified or Regenerate Person but may Sin, and that mortally, and be finally Damn'd.

But there is a difference between being able not to Sin, and actually Sinning; between not having the power to Sin, and having the Power not to Sin. Saints Sin not actually, and can (by God's Grace) not Sin:
And

And there have been such Regenerate Persons that have liv'd from the moment of their Regeneration to their Lives end without the commission of any Sin. And how comes this to be so strange a thing! Is it that God's Grace is too weak to effect it? And was St. Paul out when he says, *The God of Peace Sanctify you and make you entirely perfect* (so the original) *and may that whole Spirit, Soul and Body be preserv'd without spot unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.* Did he wish them what was impossible, and was he again mistaken when to shew the possibility he adds, *God that called you is faithful and will do it?* How many Saints have already found this true, and shall still find it so? Shall the old Adam, that finds a Thousand Difficulties in submitting to the least of God's Commandments, measure by his Ell the new Man that makes it his joy, his treasure, his delight and his life?

Chap. IX.

Theff. 5. 24. 25.

XXX. 'Tis true there are none of *Adams* Posterity but have sinn'd before their new Birth; and this is what is signified by an infinite number of Passages of Scripture which the old *Adam* can more readily turn to than those that urge the necessity of Sanctification and Perfection; because with them he would fain cover his nest of Iniquity; such are, for instance, the Passages, where 'tis said, *there is no Man that Sinneth not; in the sight of God shall no Man living be justified;* that every one ought to say, *forgive us our Sins, if we say we have not Sinn'd we lye:* And so of several others, with the Examples of *David*, of *Solomon*, of *St. Peter*, and of others: But sincerely speaking, is this the meaning of these Places; that Men in whatever state they are in, whether of Corruption, Conversion or Regeneration, do always Sin, shall not be justified, and that they every Day commit Iniquity?

XXX. Explication of some Passages of Scripture that are objected to this. Eccl. 7. 20. Pl. 143. 2. 1 John 1. 8.

And because one or two strong and perfect Men have once fallen thro' voluntary Distraction, by turning away their Eyes from their ways, and carelessly letting them wander, is this to say, that no one does or can walk without falling? In truth, I had rather hear the Devil quote Scripture to *Jesus Christ*, to ruin him and set up his own hellish Kingdom, than to see the same Scripture so cursedly abus'd by urging it against the purity and perfection of the work of the Holy Ghost.

Chap.
IX.

Is it not more clear and evident than the Sun at noon Day, that these Passages of Scripture do only belong to Unregenerate Persons, who are as yet in a state of Corruption, or if you will, at the best but in the beginning of their Conversion.

Pro. 28.
13.

Was it *Solomon's* intent to say ; that there is none in what state soever, that Sinneth not ? Why then does he say, that to obtain Mercy, a Man must have forsaken his Sins ? Was it *David's* meaning to say absolutely, that no one living, be he in what state he will, shall be justified in the sight of God, and that after Justification he shall not keep his Heart undefil'd ? He, and all the rest of the Scripture, say a hundred times over, that the Children of God (they that are Born of God by the new Birth) shall stand in the Judgment of God, and that they keep his holy Will.

And when *Jesus Christ* teaches us to say daily, *forgive us our Trespases*, is it to teach Men to Sin daily least they should falsely put up this Petition ? Is it not enough for one that Loves God, that he has Sinn'd formerly in his Darkness and enmity against God, for that Reason to ask his Pardon as well for himself now in the time of his Fidelity, whenever the Memory of his past Sins occurs to his Mind, and because it is to be fear'd he might relapse into them, unless he remember'd them ; as for others, were he himself without Sin ?

And how could *Jesus Christ* have oblig'd us in this very same Prayer to beg of God that *we might do his Will on Earth as the Angels do it in Heaven* ? Would he have inserted in the same Prayer Petitions grounded upon things contradictory ? And with relation to this last, would he have taught us to ask things impossible, and which he had neither the Will nor the Power to grant, or lastly, such things as it was our duty to ask, but without hope of obtaining them in the manner we ask them, as it would be, to do the Will of the Lord as the Angels do, that is, at least, without offending God any more ?

1 John
8, 10.

Lastly, When *St. John* says, *If we say we have no Sin we deceive ourselves*, is it not plain that he speaks of Sins that were committed in the time of our Darkness, and while we were out of Communion with God, and not yet cleans'd by the Blood of his Son ? For so

he

he himself explains it with reference to the time past, and says expressly, that whoever pretends to have Communion or Fellowship with God, and yet walks still in Darkness is a Liar. He says, he writes these things that we Sin not; and that if we have Sinned heretofore, we have Jesus Christ for Advocate and Intercessour with God: And that the sign that we know him as we ought, is, *that we keep his Commandments*, and that it is thus that the Love of God is perfected and compleated; *That he that abides in God Sins not: That he that is Born of God doth not commit Sin, and that he cannot: Because the Divine Seed abides in him: His root is Good and Divine, and all that Springs from it is all pure Goodness.* I know there is a gloss used here to avoid the force of this Passage, and that it is to be understood of a certain sort of Sin against the Holy Ghost, and which they would make us believe 'tis as great a rarity as certain monsters from the other World: But it appears from the whole Discourse of St. John, that he speaks of all Sin that is against the Law, of every Inclination and Deed that is not agreeable to Righteousness, of every motion contrary to Charity, as the hatred of our Brother, and the like, which in the Regenerate are in effect, Sins against the Holy Ghost, if it be rightly understood wherein this Sin consists. (Which I have elsewhere endeavour'd to explain) Of all these he says, *Whosoever is Born of God Sinneth not: For the Seed of God abideth in him: And he cannot Sin, because he is Born of God.* I shall not examine their Interpretation who would have these Words, *he cannot Sin*, to signify that *he cannot die in the Sin he commits.* This to me seems not worth an Answer.

Chap. IX.

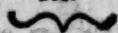
1 John 2. 1.

Oec. of the Rest. before the Inc. ch. IX.

Of the possibility of keeping the Commandments of God.

XXXI. Before we pass to the Examples of David, of Solomon, of St. Paul in the Seventh of the Romans, and to other places of Scripture, that are brought a-
 XXXI. Whether Men are able to keep God's Commandments.

Chap.
IX.



Some previous Observations.

Four e-
states of
Men.

Com-
mand-
ment of
God, and
Will of
God:
Sin,
Frailty,
Defect
and Im-
perfecti-
ons, do
differ.

gainst us, as well as to a great many more that assure us of the Truth here maintain'd, it will not be amiss throughly to examine the Question, Whether Men can keep God's Commandments?

One cannot answer this Question, either by a simple Yes or simple No, for fear of confounding divers Senses which some would be well enough pleased to throw a Cloud over, the better to escape.

First, We must distinguish the states of Men, that may here be reduc'd to four ranks: One are still voluntarily immers'd in reigning Corruption: Others are in the will and beginning of their Conversion; the Third in a state that comes very near Justification, and the last in that of the new Birth: And these again are of Three sorts, Children inexperience'd, Young Men, and Men strong in *Christ*.

Secondly, 'Tis to be observ'd, that there is a difference betwixt the Commandments of God and the most perfect Will of God, or what is most acceptable to God: As also, betwixt Sin and Frailty, Defect and Imperfection.

All that is acceptable to God and pleases him, is not therefore a Commandment of God. A Commandment of God is a Declaration that God makes to one or more Persons of certain things that they ought to do, or leave undone, to draw nigh to him or his Love: 'Tis the Declaration that they ought to employ their Desire, their Mind, their Heart, and all their Powers about God, to the utmost of their Capacity. To Sin is not to do this, or to do the contrary. But it is not to Sin, not to do all that is pleasing to God from a Principle of involuntary Frailty: 'Tis only a Defect or an Imperfection. For Example, 'tis a thing well-pleasing to God, that a Man be as perfect as an Angel: Could a Man spend every minute of his Life, without losing one, by sleep, and by busying himself in the distracting Duties which the Infirmary of our Nature requires, could he, I say, spend his whole time without any Interruption, in thinking upon God, in loving, praising, adoring him as fervently as the Angels, and make others praise him, this would questionless be a thing which in itself consider'd, would be very well-pleasing to God: It is certain, nevertheless that during this Life

no

no one can do such a Thing, which yet is in itself so pleasing to God. But it is likewise true that the omitting the continuation of it, is no Sin, nor breach of God's Commandment. For tho' Man was bound to this in the state which God created him in, and this incapacity of doing it at present be a consequent of his Sin, yet does he not Sin in not maintaining this continual act, nor does God at present require it of Man, having never enjoyn'd that he should love him in as continued and as extensive a manner as the Angels do; but only that every one should love him according to his ability, after the Grace that God gives and offers them. This is God's Commandment.

Chap.

IX.

Lastly, We must take notice, that the Question here is not, whether Man can keep the Commandments of God by the strength of his corrupt Nature, and of his own Will, without God's Grace; but only, whether he can keep them after God has begun to repair his Nature by his internal Graces, whereof he offers the augmentation a Thousand ways to all Men; but more especially to those to whom he declares his Commandments.

XXXII. 1. This then being premised, I say, first, that no Man whatever state he be in, whether of Corruption, Conversion, Purification or Regeneration, can keep God's Commandments by his own strength, and the force of his carnal Birth deriv'd from the old Man, but only by the Grace of God who recovers his Faculties out of their Hellish disorder, and presents to them Light and Grace to Operate in them. This I think needs no proof after what we have demonstrated concerning the Impotence of Man.

XXXII.
Solution of the preceding Question.

1. Man by the strength of his old Birth cannot

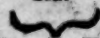
keep God's Commandments.

2. In the second place, corrupt Man cannot keep the Commandments of God, whatever Grace God affords and presents to him, so long as he will not turn away his Desire, his Mind, his Heart, and his Faculties from his Corruption, and turn them towards the Grace of

2. He that turns not away from self towards

God, cannot keep his Commandments, tho' Grace be presented to him.

Chap.
IX.



3. *Begin-
ners are
able to
fulfil the
Command-
ments
which
God gives
to them.*

God. This is very plain of itself: For this is to re-
ject God's Grace. Now we cannot keep his Com-
mandments, but by his Grace, as was said in the first
Conclusion.

3. In the Third place, a Man that begins to be
Converted can keep, if he will, all the Command-
ments that God lays upon him. I do not say, all that
is most pleasing to God; nor likewise all the Com-
mandments that God imposes on Persons more ad-
vanced than such a one is; but I speak of all the Com-
mandments that God lays on him according to the state
he is in. Tho' the commands of God be universal
and impartial, yet they do not concern all alike, and
in the same extent; but only every one according to
the difference of his state and capacity: They are uni-
versal and impartial, with respect to all those that are
in the same state: But as to different estates, a begin-
ner is not oblig'd to do the Works of the perfect; but
only to do those that are proportion'd to the state
which his Desire, his Mind, his Heart, and his Facul-
ties are then in before God, towards whom he is turn-
ed. If he do not the works of the perfect, if he bring
not forth the Fruits of Saints, his omission is not an
actual and new Sin, against the Commandments of
God; it is an imperfection and a defect. But he does
indeed Sin against God's Commandments, if he vio-
lates what God requires of him, in the state wherein
he is. But this is what a Man of a good will can a-
void, to whom God makes known his Commandments.
For God never makes known any thing to a Man as his
Duty which he is not able to perform; and if he had
not Power, God would when he gave him the Com-
mandment give also Power to do it. Otherwise it
would be unbecoming the Wisdom and Goodness of
God to lay commands on such as were utterly unable
to keep them, seeing God gives his Commandments on
purpose to have them obey'd.

*The Law
was not
given,
but that*

Here I shall be told, no doubt, that the Law was
given for other ends, viz. *That Sin might abound,*
and to work Wrath, and not that Man should become
it might be obey'd. How it brings forth Wrath. Rom: 5. 20. 4. 15.

just

just by keeping it, What horrible blindness is it to abuse thus the Words of Scripture, to make such Objections as these out of them! Does not David say exprelly to God, *Thou hast given thy Commandments that we should keep them exactly?* And does not he that keeps God's Commandments become just by so doing? Yes; but at this rate (I shall be ask'd) what will become of the Righteousness of Faith? We should then be justified by the Law! Not at all. We are justified by Faith which keeps and fulfills the Law; or we are justified by keeping the Law; which keeping of it is effected by the strength of Faith, and not by the strength of the literal Commandment, and of the dry Notion of the Law destitute of Faith. St. Paul says, a Man is justified by a Faith that establishes the Law; again he says, that the Spirit of *Jesus Christ* (the Spirit of Faith and Grace) fulfils in the Justified the Righteousness of the Law, which was impossible to the Corruption of the Flesh: and in another place, that the Law leadeth us to *Jesus Christ* and to his Righteousness; because whoever keeps the Law by the Spirit of Faith, comes to *Jesus Christ*, who gives him Grace to do by the same Spirit all that the Law commands, and that perfectly.

But if the same Apostle says, that the Law was given that the Offence or Wrath of God might abound, his meaning is not, that God gave his Commandments to Men to encrease their Sins, by giving them more occasion to break his Laws. Such a design may become the Devil, but not God, whose Law does no otherwise make Sin and Wrath abound, than by letting Men see by what it declares, that their Sins are greater than they imagin'd, and that the Wrath of God extends farther than they thought. The Law therefore does not encrease Sin and Misery, but it does Men's Knowledge and Sense of them: It makes them appear greater and more abundant than they before saw or thought them. And so the Law was given to make Sin abound by the sense and acknowledgment of it, and that solely for this end, that Men should abstain from these Sins by keeping the Law, and that so they might attain to Righteousness, not by relying upon their own corrupt strength, but by embracing the

Chap.
IX.

Pr. 119.

4.

Rom. 3.

30.

ibid 8.

3, 4.

ibid 10.

4.

Grace

Chap.
IX.



Grace of God and the Spirit of Faith, and resigning themselves up to him, who by his Divine power fulfills in Man all that the Law requires, and works in him a Righteousness to which the Law bears witness, and which is the fulfilling thereof. And this is what *St. Paul* means and teaches.

4. They
that are
advanc'd
in Purifi-
cation
can per-
fectly ful-
fil God's
Com-
mand-
ments,

4. Therefore, in the fourth place, one that is in the state of Purification, especially if he be in the most advanc'd Degree thereof, can fulfil and effectually perfectly does fulfill God's Commandments. Because the Spirit of Grace and Faith works strongly in him, and attacks the evil in its very Root, and fastens upon the last and least Grain of the Seed of the Serpent, which is in Man's Heart; and this Divine Spirit being stronger than the Devil, and all the Powers of Darkness, compleats his Conquest, and destroys the works of *Satan* according to the utmost rigour of the Law: I say again, this is not done but by the force of the Spirit of Grace and of Faith; and further, that this is not done presently and in an instant; the Faculties of Man not being able to endure all of a suddain the whole force of the Activity of the Holy Spirit; but God commands them nothing but according to the measure of their strength and of the Grace which he affords them; and so when their strength grows up towards the fulness of their State, and God boundlessly encreases his Divine Graces, Men are then able perfectly to keep God's Commandments.

5. The
Regene-
rate can
perfectly
and con-
stantly
keep the
Com-
mand-
ments of
God.

1 Tim. I.

9.

John 7.

38.

5. In the fifth Place, all that are Regenerate do then, and can continually to their lives end, keep the Commandments of God perfectly. Here the Commandments lose the Nature of Commandments and Law, and take that of a thing Natural and Engraven in the Heart. The Law is no more a Law to the Righteous. There is no need of enjoining him to do good, and not to do evil. His Heart of itself inclines him to it; for it is become the Temple and Throne of the Holy Ghost, whereof the Nature and Motions are, to be living Springs of good, *living Waters springing up into eternal Life*. 'Tis needless to bid a Man of a sound and healthy Constitution breath, see, hear, eat and be doing. He is far enough from failing in any of these. He does it of his own accord without being told;

Chap.
IX.

told; for 'tis his Element, his Life, his Delight, so far is it from being a trouble: They are his natural Pro-
pensions, which he could not forbear, but with the
greatest pain and difficulty. Just so it is with one
born again in the Holy Spirit, and in the Element of
the Divine Will. God's Commandments are his Life,
Delight and Pleasure, and to love and keep them with
all his Heart is his sole Glory. See *David's Psalms*,
especially the 119th.

6. In the sixth place, whoso knowingly and willfully
fails to keep God's Commandments, falls from the
State of Grace he was in, and becomes again a Servant
of Death, whether he were before in either the State
of Conversion, of Purification, or even of Regenera-
tion; he is from that time neither converted, pure, nor
just; but is again wicked, polluted and unrighteous,
and damn'd too if he dies in this State; for having
thus forsaken God, the Convert is turn'd again to the
Devil; the cleans'd has profan'd the Blood of *Jesus*
Christ, by which he had been hitherto cleans'd; the Re-
generate has sin'd against the Holy Ghost in the most
deplorable manner imaginable. Nevertheless, they
may yet rise from their Fall by the Grace of God,
which is wanting to none as long as they live.

But withal, the higher the Degree they are fallen
from, the more painful and hard is their Recovery:
May be of an hundred Regenerate, that may have thus
fallen once, not Ten of them have risen again, and
possibly 'twas never known that any one of those that
have fallen twice from a second Regeneration, ever re-
covered out of it for a third. It is the same in Propor-
tion with those that are purify'd; as their State is less
advanc'd than that of Regeneration, so do they like-
wise more easily rise from their mortal falls; and this
with more or less difficulty, according as their Progress
was in Purification. New Converts do more easily
return to their first Station, than if they had made
greater Proficiency, and had then quite fallen back.
The beginnings of some are nothing for a considerable
time but falling and rising again, new falls, and then
recovering themselves, and so for a long time; but we
cannot find it so in the way of Purification, and much
less in the State of Regeneration, where the falls are
falls

6. Who-
soever
breaks
the Com-
mand-
ments of
God
knowing-
ly, falls
from the
state of
Regene-
ration
into that
of Dam-
nation.

The
strong
when they
fall, fall
more
heavily
than the
weak.

Chap.
IX.

7. The
more ad-
vanc'd,
the more
difficult
and pain-
ful to
break
God's
Com-
mand-
ments.

falls of strong Men, and they venture their Necks in irrecoverable Danger. The falls of Children, and weak folks are not so dangerous.

7. In the seventh Place, Converts, they that are in the way of Purification, and the Regenerate may all fall from their State if they will; as we have seen that they may also continue and proceed therein by keeping the Commandments of God; but with this difference; Converts find it harder to keep God's Commandments than to leave them undone; and at first they find in themselves a greater readiness to break them than to put them in practice; because the Devil and Law of sin have as yet great Power in the ground of the Heart and in the Inclinations accustomed to evil, and the good comes there but as a Guest and helpless Stranger; but in Proportion to our Proficiency the difficulty of doing God's Commandments and the easiness to break them abates; so that in the State of Purification 'tis no harder to do good than to do evil; and in Regeneration 'tis incomparably more easy to do well, and perfectly keep God's Will, than it was formerly to break them. To do evil, or omit the Will of God, is a thing wherein we then find a Thousand difficulties, and almost an impossibility; for the Light of Conscience must first be stifled, and so must the Motions of God, and his Holy Spirit renounc'd; which seldom befalls a Heart that has duly tasted the Love of God. But yet as painful as it is, this sometimes happens; as for instance, it did in *David*: for this Saint fell not of Infirmity as some fancy: I believe indeed that in the continuation of his sin there was dreadful blindness and insensibility; but it is certain that towards the beginning of his Fall he voluntarily stifled the Light of Truth in his Heart, and that he obstinately resisted the Motions and Admonitions of the Holy Ghost to hearken to the Voice of his Lust. And this is what he himself sufficiently owns, *Behold, thou lovest truth in the inward parts, and didst teach me Wisdom in the Secret of my Heart.* Without doubt it had been abundantly more easy for him to have stood firm to his God, than to be unfaithful to him, as he most prodigiously was, to the Astonishment of Heaven and Earth.

8. Lastly,

8. Lastly, I say for the eighth and last conclusion, that Converts, Proficients, and the Regenerate themselves do sometimes fall by Surprise and Frailty, and that God does not impute it to them for sin, nor do these Falls break the course of their Righteousness and of their keeping the Commandments of God. Lest the rascally sloth of the old *Adam* should cloak itself under what is here said, I must further explain it.

XXXIII. I said but now, that God does not require of Saints, while they are in this Life, the same Degrees of Perfection, which would have been in them had they not sinn'd, or which are in the Angels; for God does not require they should without ceasing actually, have their Thoughts fix'd upon him, nor that they should without interruption exercise Acts of Desire, of Love and of Praising of God: Sleep, Eating, and Drinking, Attendance upon material and necessary Things, the action of outward Objects on our Senses, interpose and take us up in their turn; and then 'tis impossible but we must leave for a while directly thinking upon God, though in the bottom of our Heart we ever retain a general regard and an habitual Inclination towards him. For in effect, the case stands thus: The Desire, the Mind, the Heart of one Regenerate are always set towards God, and though their Act ceases, yet as soon as ever it is exerted it is immediately carried towards God by the force of this habitual Inclination, without reflecting almost at all on what we are about; for the Weakness of our Nature, and our present frail State will not suffer us always to make just and formal Reflexions on what we do internally or externally.

8. *The most advanced subject to falls of Surprise.*

XXXIII. *Falls of surprise in the Regenerate. They touch not the ground of the Soul.*

Three things here are then to be noted relating to the interiour and ground of the Soul in Persons Regenerate; one is, that though the acting Principle of the Soul be not always in act, yet it is always virtually turn'd towards God; the other, that as soon as ever this Principle does put forth any acts, they run all, as I may say, on God's side, for that way it leans; and the third, that exercising these Acts for God, we do not always reflect on all the particular Circumstances of what we are doing, either for want of leisure or ability, or because we think we understand well enough what

Disposition of their interiour as to this.

Chap.
IX.

*And of
their ex-
tensions.*

what we are about, having done the like often before, with knowledge and deliberation.

As to the Flesh and corporeal and external Things, it goes thus with one Regenerate : First, these things make Impression on his Soul by sensible Images, which necessarily taking up the Soul, divert it more or less, according as they are more or less material, from the direct and particular consideration of things Divine. Secondly, Of these material and outward things, some may serve us as means to advance ourselves and Neighbours more or less strongly, more or less immediately towards things Divine ; and others may be means to turn us away from them more or less powerfully. Almost all external things relating to Life, Eating, Drinking, and other bodily Goods, with our converse with Men are of this Nature.

XXXIV.
*How such
falls or
faults
happen.*

XXIV. Let us suppose now, that certain outward things make Impression upon a Regenerate Soul : First, It will have the Sense and Perception of them, which while they proceed no farther cannot be imputed to it as Evil : Secondly, the Soul upon this being to act on her part, the acting Principle of her Desire, Mind, and Will, presently applies itself to this thing in an habitual regard and seeking of God ; for the Soul will immediately think with herself whether such and such a thing be pleasing or displeasing to God, whether it be a means to promote or hinder his Glory, to prejudice or further such external things as may be profitable means to us in this Life : There will instantly spring up in the Soul an actual desire that that may be done, which may be good in God's sight, and that avoided which may be of ill tendency. God beholds this disposition in the bottom of the Heart ; and approves of it as a substantial good, with which he is very well pleased ; but because outward things are transient and unknown, this Soul either may not have the skill or leisure fully to understand the matter before it, or may think it knows it well enough already, and so it comes to pass that it admits as good some outward thing which yet is in effect Evil ; or rejects as evil what possibly may be good. These are the Faults of Surprise, of Frailty and Infirmary, to which Regenerate Persons are still liable. I shall give an instance or two of them.

XXXV.

XXXV. *Joshua*, *Moses's* Successor, was no Question a Soul Regenerate in the Spirit of *Christ*. It was from a Principle of Faith and Fidelity to God, that he undertook to exterminate the *Caananites*; yet whilst he was actually busied in the execution of this work of Fidelity, behold disguis'd *Caananites* come and present themselves before him, and pretending to be strangers desire to enter into League with him. *Joshua* hears to their Proposals. And in this there was no hurt. Then he thinks on God, viz. That God had not forbid him to make any League with distant Nations, but had allowed him so to do; his design therefore was to do a thing that was not only not displeasing to God, but acceptable to him. God saw and liked this Disposition and Intention of his Heart, and of the rest of the *Israelites* that obey'd *Joshua*, because it was God's Will they should. But *Joshua* not knowing these People to proceed right, ought to have advis'd with God, whom he had so ready at hand, as I may say. Which nevertheless he did not, and this was it wherein he fail'd through Frailty. How so? He took it for granted that these People spoke truth; and this he did from a Principle of Weakness inseparable from Nature, viz. That we ought not to think Men, and those in great number, coming in the manner these Men did, and all affirming and sincerely protesting that they came from a far Country, are to be look'd upon as Cheats: The weakness on which this Principle is grounded, is our invincible Ignorance, it being naturally impossible for us to know Mens Hearts, and things at a distance but by the words of others: *Joshua* might indeed have known them by the Revelation of God, had he enquired of him; but for want of experience, and through frailty, he did not imagine that the Heart of Man was so subtle and crafty to circumvent him in such a manner; and possibly he might think it needless, or indeed that it would be to tempt God in a sort, to go to enquire of him about a thing he took to be naturally evident. This fault did no way prejudice the Fidelity which he and the *Israelites* ow'd to God; as appears, from God's still making them victorious, and not treating them as Transgressors of his Commandment, as he did upon Account of *Acan* after the

XXXV.
An Ex-
ample of
a fault
of frailty
in *Joshua*.

Chap.
IX.

XXXVI.
Example
of Joli-
ah.

the Pillage of *Jerico* ; yet they did an external thing that was really evil, and which was attended with ill consequences, thinking they did a good one, and doing it with the best Intention in the World.

XXXVI. Thus it was with *Josias*, that King so holy and so full of the Love of God, when he would go fight against the King of *Egypt*, who was marching towards the borders of his Kingdom. *Josias* loving God with all his Heart and Soul, govern'd and protected his Subjects and Kingdom from a Principle of the Love of God ; and this Divine Principle oblig'd him to oppose all Attempts made against the People of God. This was the Spring of his Action, and was very well-pleasing in the Eyes of the Lord. He was informed that a Foreign Prince was drawing towards his Country with a great Army ; naturally he could not but believe that this King had a design upon the Realm of *Judah* ; (and this was not the first time) the Frailty of our Nature, which permits us not to dive into the designs of others, nor into the true Motive of things, could not secure him from Error. Upon this mistake, his Divine Heart, filled with the Love of God, and of his Neighbour, for God's sake, made him march against this Foreigner to give him Battle. Upon this the other acquaints him, that he had no design against him or his People ; that what he did was by God's command, and that *Josias* should not oppose God : *Josias* would have done well to have consulted God upon the matter ; and this Omission was his Fault ; but he did not think it likely that God should communicate his Inspirations to a Prince that was an Heathen and an Infidel, and so, from a Principle of an Heart well-dispos'd and pleasing to God, he does an outward thing which he thought good, but which was indeed evil. God, no doubt, ever approv'd the bottom of his Heart ; but he outwardly punished him because of the ill choice he made through Frailty and Inadvertency of an outward thing which he believed to be good when it was not so ; so likewise his Punishment, though great to human appearance, was to him in God's Designation, an Introduction to his eternal Happiness. God at the same time, and by the same means, rewarded the Heart with Life Eternal, and punished the outward Fault by Temporal Death.

XXXVII.

XXXVII. Such are the faults of the Righteous and Regenerate: They regard first, the outward; secondly, the bottom of their Souls, and the habitual Disposition of their Faculties are always set towards God's; in the third place, the immediate and inward acts of these Faculties of the Desire, the Mind and the Heart are ever pure and divine; it remains then, that the outward thing, the object, the time, the circumstances which they believe to be good, and which through natural Infirmary, and for want of skill and experience they do not sufficiently understand, are not such as they thought them to be; and so they are mistaken in embracing them, which they would never have done had they known them.

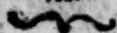
XXXVII:
Properties
of the
Faults
of the
Righte-
ous.

The faults of the Righteous then are things good as to the Principle, and as to the main, or as to the bottom and internal of the action; and are evil as to the external matter. It must be remember'd that the Soul, the Desire, the Mind, the Heart, the intentions fall not; they are not separated from the Love of God; the Righteous does not fall as to that, nor is he deceiv'd as to the external, when he consults God, and upon that, informs others of the divine Will: But his fault falls upon the outward and the circumstances of Things, when he does not advise with God, either through distractions, forgetfulness, or because he judges it not then necessary. And this is what we must be sure to observe, that the old *Adam* may not cover his wicked Actions committed out of pure Malice under the mantle of the imperfections and frailty of the Saints.

XXXVIII. And it is yet further to be observ'd, that these kinds of Faults are scarcely to be found but in such of the Regenerate as are yet but Children, seldom in the grown, very rarely in the perfect and strong Men, unless it be upon some very extraordinary surprises: For commonly, they walk perfectly in the ways of God, they run in them, nay fly in them, as I may say; and yet such an object may lie in their way as may cause them to slip thro' surprize; but then God gives them his Hand, and suffers them not to fall; or if they fall he raises up them again, and lets them not hurt themselves. Let us consider the Officer we

XXXVIII
Rarity of
the Faults
of the
Righte-
ous.

Chap.
IX.



spoke of in the foregoing comparison; upon the recovery of his strong hold and the expulsion of the Enemy, who then besieges him, he commits no Fault contrary to his Fidelity and the Orders of his Sovereign; all his marches are just and faithful; which hinders not but that nevertheless running upon the sudden alarm of the Enemy he may make a false step, and thro' haste may be mistaken in some Things of outward direction; but in the bottom, he serves his Prince with an inviolable Fidelity; his Faults are of no consequence; both because with time he amends them, and commits them no more, and because God interposes, and even draws good out of them.

XXXIX.
Further
Objection
against
the Word
Perfect-
ly: In
what
sense to
be al-
low'd in
what not.

XXXIX. And this may suffice concerning the keeping of God's Commandments, which have unluckily been held impossible: I foresee one cavil more, and 'tis about the Word *Perfectly*. What! Keep God's Commandments perfectly, and most perfectly! Who dare be so rash as to say Man can do this tho' never so fill'd with the Grace of God! After all, are not Men still frail? And have not all their Works a touch of this frailty? And this is the last hold the old *Adam* flies to; for in truth, 'tis none but he that seeks these subterfuges, it being impossible they should come from true Love. No one ever heard a true Lover complaining 'twas impossible for him to love with all his Heart the Object which he really lov'd. A rare complaint to come from Sincere Love! I cannot possibly Love you perfectly. And is it possible this should proceed from a Heart fill'd with the Omnipotent Spirit of Infinite Love! All pure mistake. This cannot be. 'Tis the old *Adam* who in his Hypocrisy desiring to pass for a Lover of God, and finding that the Love of God is to him an insupportable burden, would fain by his Sophistries rid himself of it. But these Sophisms of the old *Adam* are full of Fraud and Ignorance.

Pray tell me what rashness there is in maintaining that the work of God is a perfect work, and that the work of Grace is infinitely beyond that of Nature and of the Devil; and that with and by the Spirit of infinite and perfect Love we may Love perfectly?

But

Chap.
IX.

But to throw down this shameful hut of the old *Adam*, let us ask him what he means by the word *Perfectly*, which he lies skulking under? If by this word *Perfectly* be meant *without offending God any more*, without sinning and contracting new guilt, without Pollution, and as much as God requires of them, then I say that in this Sense the Righteous can keep, and always, the Commandments of God most perfectly. But if by the word *Perfectly* you will needs understand in so high and spiritual a manner that has nothing in it favouring of the frailty of our Nature; in a manner continual, without any relaxation, without Clouds or Vicissitudes, in Sentiments, Contemplations, and Ardours of an actual and indiscontinued Love, as the Angelical Creatures do, that have no frail Body like ours, in this Sense the exception suggested by the old *Adam*, is one of his own Chimera's, which only proves his Ignorance; for no one ever thought or pretended that the Righteous kept, or could or were oblig'd to keep in this Life the Commandments of God in this manner God does not require this of them; for this is impossible. There are no such perfect ones but in Heaven; and a Man must have lost all common Sense, before he can pretend to any such thing while he lives on Earth. In this Sense all the best works of the Saints favour of the frailty of Nature. I do not say of the defilement of Sin, but of Frailty; for they are neither so constant, nor so bright, nor so intense, nor so extensive, nor so perfect in all their circumstances as they would have been, had not our Body and Nature become gross, dark and heavy, as now they are. The works of the most holy, of *Abel*, of *Abraham*, *Elias* and *St. John*, and of *Jesus Christ* himself, were not exempt from frailty in this Sense: But this makes nothing against the perfection God requires of his Saints in this Life. Their Works, tho' frail, and their Persons may be very perfect in God's sight.

XL. Observe we further, (to leave no shift to corruption) that the behaviour of Saints under their Frailties, is quite other than the old *Adam's* towards the same Frailties. He seeks, loves, and is glad to find them, and that they may serve him as a pretence to excuse him from spiritual Duties, which are to him a heavy

XL. How
Regene-
rate Per-
sons en-
ertain
their
Frailties.

- Chap. heavy burthen : But Saints seek them not, are no
IX. pleased with them, yield to them purely out of necessity and as little as possible; they look upon them as a great load under which they sigh and groan; they esteem them an hindrance to their Happiness; and wish Death would come and break the Chains that hold them thus in Bondage. For Example : See how the Divine *Thauler* speaks of the Sleep of the Righteous, which is one of their Frailties : *We should sleep but little, and as soon as we awake presently rise both in Body and Mind, with fear and displeasure; and say, alas! 'tis the Infirmity of my corrupt Nature! O abyss of Goodness, of Love, and of Greatness, my Lord and my God, how have I once more forgotten Thee! See the Disposition wherein St. Therese, used Eating, and Drinking, and Sleeping. The Hour (of Meal or Sleep) being come, says she somewhere, I found my self seiz'd with great Grief, besides that the time of my usual Vomiting drew nigh, (this came to her, for that she could not think of Eating but with disgust and aversion) seeing my self then on one Hand thus fetter'd by the Body, and the Mind on the other wishing the time were Gods, I fell into such Trouble, that I began to weep bitterly, and as I often am, was full of Sorrow and sadly cast down. Whilst I was in this Affliction, Our Lord appear'd to me and greatly comforted me, and said to me, that I should submit to and endure these Infirmities for his sake, and that it was needful I should live yet longer.*
- Life of St. Theresa c. 40.
- Imit. J. To these I shall add the Pious and Devout a *Kempis*,
Christ, who speaking of the same Things, says thus; *Eating*
Book 1. *and Drinking, Waking and Sleeping, Working and Rest-*
ch. 22. *ing, with the rest of the like troublesome Necessities, to which our Nature is subject, are really a Misery to one that truly fears God, and desires nothing so much as to be deliver'd from the Body, and from the Bondage of Sin. These bodily necessities must certainly be a strange weight on the Soul that lives by the Spirit of God. These are almost the very Words of St. Paul upon this Subject. Whilst we are in the Tabernacle of our Body we groan, as being laden with a heavy Burthen, (συνεζωται βαρυνον;) such are the Infirmities of the Saints, and such the Disposition wherewith they consider'd them, and answer'd their Demands. Let those*
2 Cor. 5. 4. *now*

now that shelter themselves under their Frailties see whether they mean such Frailties as these, and their unavoidable consequences, and whether they stand thus affected towards them, or at least come something near it: But after all, this hinders not but the truly Regenerate may lead perfect Lives before God even in this World.

Chap.
IX.

Objections from some Passages of Scripture, and the Answers.

XLII. After what has been said, we are not to hearken to the Objections made in favour of Sin and Corruption, as when 'tis pertly said, *the Righteous falls seven times a Day*, not in the least taking notice, that these falls are those of frailty and surprize, or indeed of Afflictions, with which God is not offended; or when 'tis at random ask'd in the Words of Scripture, *Who can say, I have made my Heart pure, I am clean from Sin?* not observing that the Scripture is not against a Justified and Regenerate Souls, saying, "The Lord has declar'd that he has himself purified my Heart, and consequently, I am clean from all Sin; but it only shews, that no one can of himself give himself this assurance, nor this purity of Heart; none indeed being able to say, I have cleans'd my Heart, and therefore am sure I have no Sin.

XLII. E-
vasions
sought
by the
Sinner in
some Pas-
sages of
Scrip-
ture.
Prov.
24. 16.
Prov.
10. 9.

XLIII. Again when 'tis vainly said, that 'tis Pharisaical presumption to pretend to any such perfection, or to come near it, we should think 'tis the common Justification and certainty of Perseverance, that rather deserves to be look'd upon as Pharisaical presumption in those who still Sin against God. What presumption of the *Pharisee* pray is it to pretend nothing of ones self; but to expect all from the Power of Divine Grace? If this be Pharisaism, I maintain such Pharisaism is better than our Modern Christianity. Certainly we should blush for shame to make such impious Objections against the Almighty strength of the Holy Ghost, on which alone this Doctrine is founded.

XLIII.
Whether
this be a
Doctrine
of Pre-
sumption.

Chap.
IX.

The Example of *David* is also alledg'd, who ceased to be Regenerate, and by his Sin fell again into the Bondage of Death. But this concludes nothing against such as continue stedfast in the state of Regeneration; besides, that *David* recovering himself by the Grace of God, and afterward standing firm and falling no more, this second new Birth, with the purity that ever after attended it, should rather be drawn into a rule and precedent, than an extraordinary Fall by which he fell from his first Regeneration. In a Word, the Example of *David* is to make the most Holy tremble, and to encourage those that fall to return to their first purity, and constantly persevere therein. What is in all this, that in the least favours the supine Sloath of the abettors of Unrighteousness?

XLIII.
Explica-
tion of a
Passage
of St.
Paul,
Rom. 7.
concern-
ing him-
self. St.
Paul
there
speaks of
four
states.

XLIII. The Example of *St. Paul* is much stood upon, who without all doubt was Regenerate, and yet says of himself, *that he still did the Evil he would not, and did not the Good which he would.* But assuredly *St. Paul* is not rightly understood.

St. Paul designing by a lively Example to set forth the whole process of a Soul from its Sin and Impurity, to its Restoration and Justification, takes this Example from himself. In the seventh Chapter of this Epistle to the *Romans*, from the seventh Verse to the twentieth of the Chapter following, he represents of himself as passing successively through three or four states; first, through that of *Predominant Corruption*; secondly, through that of *Conversion*; thirdly, through that of *Purification*; and lastly, how he came to *Justification and the new Birth*. He speaks therefore of four very different states which must not be confounded, lest we mix, as is commonly done here, Light with Darknes.

The First.

Thus then he represents himself in the state of reigning Corruption. He says (v. 7.) he knew not what Lust was; and that he liv'd carelessly and without all remorse of Conscience; (v. 9.) *formerly I liv'd without the Law.* This state of *St. Paul* was undoubtedly so far from being a Regenerate one, that it was a state of Damnation.

Then,

Then, he represents how he afterwards began to enter into the state of Conversion. He says, that this was by the Law; that the Law gave him to understand that he was full of Concupiscence and evil Desires; and that the discovery it made of them to him was endless, and let him see that his Life was a meer Death, and that his Inclinations and Actions were so many Sins; (see Verses the 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, and 13.) Here was the beginning of his Conversion; For seeing himself Dead and Wretched, this could not but make him uneasy, and turn his desires and thoughts towards Life and Goodness; and this is properly the business and effect of the Law.

In the third place, St. Paul afterwards describes, how when he began to be Converted, and to set himself about the purifying of his Corrupt Heart, there were two Parties form'd within him; one for the good & another for the evil. For as Sin had reign'd in the bottom of his Heart, and struck its root deep in it, and planted in his Desires, Understanding and Heart, ill and strong Habits; so when he was stricken and pierc'd by Grace, St. Paul complying with this Grace, by his liberty turn'd the acts of his Desire, of his Mind and Heart, towards the good: But the ill customs that would not quit their hold of his Faculties, accusom'd to Evil, were often overcome of it. His Heart therefore was divided. He begun actually to turn toward good, to approve and to be pleased with it; his liking, consent or liberty, tended that way; and 'tis this part of his inward ground, that he calls, the *inward Man and the Mind*: But his bias led him mostly to Evil; and 'tis this part of his corrupt interiour that he calls the *outward Man, the Flesh, the Members of the Flesh*; because this inward Corruption came from the outward Flesh, and because the outward supported it mightily, as long as this carnal Corruption still held out in the Fortress of his Heart. And thus the Apostle in this state partly conquer'd on one side, and was partly conquer'd on the other, and so had neither Peace nor Liberty. And this makes him say, v. 14. that he is carnal and sold under Sin: v. 15. That he does what he approves not; and that he does not what he would: That he does what he condemns: v. 17. That it is not he

Chap.
IX.

The Second.

The Third
state:
That of
strife in
St. Paul.

Chap.
IX.

(the new party that had gain'd the acts of his Desires and of his Will) but Sin that dwells in him (the Evil Habits of Sin, that, for all his new Desires, still kept their residence in his interior, in the bottom of his corrupt Heart) v. 18. that in him, that is in his Flesh (in the carnal parts of his interior, in the Habits of his Heart which the Flesh had corrupted, and where it still ruled) was no good: That he had in him the acts of a good will, but that he could not bring them to effect, because (v. 20. and 21.) of Sin remaining in him. (v. 22, 23.) He actually delighted as to what of him was most spiritual and internal in the Law of God; but as to the party the members of the Body had gain'd, and wherein they had engraven their Laws and Customs, there he met with resistance that made him a captive to the Laws of Sin, and of these Evil Habits: In such manner (v. 24, 25.) that he sided partly with the Law of God and partly with that of Sin as to the Flesh, or as to the carnal Faction that was within him: And that this is a wretched Condition, out of which he hoped by the Grace of God in *Christ Jesus* to be deliver'd from. Now without all peradventure, this is a plain and clear description of the state wherein *St. Paul* had been at the beginning of his Purification, and before his Justification, and new Birth; and 'tis clear that 'tis only to represent the matter more lively that he speaks of himself as if he were yet in that state.

The
Fourth
State of
St. Paul,
that of
the new
Birth.

But when he comes at last to set forth the state of Regeneration, in which he then really was, he speaks in a quite different strain; and see what he says of it, immediately after he had told us (*ch. 7. v. 25.*) that he hoped that the Grace of God in *Jesus Christ* would deliver him from the former state, wherein he had represented his Captivity to the Law of Sin and Condemnation: He says then (*ch. 8. v. 1, 2.*) *but now there is no Condemnation* (nothing to be Condemn'd) *to such as being in Christ Jesus walk no more after the Flesh, but after the Spirit. For the Law of the living Spirit of Jesus Christ has freed me from the Law of Sin and Death.* God having (v. 3.) condemn'd and destroy'd Sin (the roots and ill habits of evil) in the Flesh (in the interior that was yet carnal and corrupt) (v. 5.) *That the Righteousness exacted by the Law may be fulfill'd in us,*
whq

who no longer act after the Inclinations of the Flesh, but according to the Motions of the Spirit. 'Tis from this fourth Description that we take what we would apply to the state of Regeneration.

XLIV. I am e'en tir'd with laying open all the shameful lurking holes to which our old Adam would make his escape to save his Life, when he hears that to be Happy he must necessarily be Regenerate, and that Regeneration is inconsistent with his manner of Life. Let us not heed his murmurings nor complaints: But consult the Oracles of the Holy Ghost, the Examples and Testimonies of the Saints. We shall find many such to whom God himself bears Witness that they were Righteous and Perfect. The old and new Testament abound with such Examples. The *Psalms* almost throughout speak of the just, pure, upright in Heart, of those that have their Hearts and Hands clean, of such as walk and slip not in the ways of God, that keep his Precepts with joy and delight, that do no Iniquity, that are strong and valiant in God, who with God tread down their Enemies, and leap over obstacles and walls of difficulties, and whose Youth and Strength is renew'd as that of Eagles. The new Testament speaks all along of being Perfect, of keeping the Commandments of God, of being pure, of living as that *Jesus Christ* liv'd; that *Jesus Christ* fulfills and perfects all in all; that with his Grace we are strong in the midst of weakness; that with him we can do all Things, and are more than Conquerors. *St. Paul* says, *Jesus Christ* will have his Church perfect and without spot, even here: You are perfect, says he to some, or as many of you as are perfect do these Things, perfect your Sanctification. My Brethren, rejoice and be ye perfect. God will have us all to meet in the Unity of Faith, and of the Knowledge of the Son of God in the state of a perfect Man, according to the perfect stature of *Christ*. *Epaphras* prays for you, that you may continue perfect and compleat. Let us go on to perfection. We exhort and teach-----, that we may make every Man perfect in *Jesus Christ*.

Chap.
IX.

XLIV. That they are to be hearken'd to who exhort to perfection, and not they that dishearten them.

Eph. 1.
23.
2 Cor.
12. 10.
Phil. 4.
13.
Rom. 8.
36.
Eph. 5.
27.
Phil. 3.
15.
2 Cor.
7. 1.
ibid 13.
11.
Eph. 4.
13.

Col. 4. 12. Heb. 6. 1. Coloss. 1. 28.

Chap.
IX.

71.12

Numb.

14. 31.

Is it not better, as imperfect as we yet are, to hearken to these true and generous Souls, that we may be animated with hope, and strengthen'd in God, to become what at present we are not, than to give Ear to cowardly Seducers, who like the Wicked Spy's in Moses's time, make the Heart of the People melt, and by their Devilish Lies and Calumnies incline them to rebel against God, and to return to Egypt? 'Tis true (said these miscreants) *the Land is a good Land, and a Country flowing with Milk and Honey: But the Cities are great and strong, and so are the People, and there are among them terrible Giants: We shall never be able to Conquer them for they are mightier then we.* " 'Tis true, say Men now-a-days, as they did, the state of such a Regeneration, and of true perfection of so perfect a Christianity is a very fine thing: 'Tis a state full of joy and divine sweetness: But withal, 'tis hard to come at. There are high Walls of difficulties. Sin and the Devil are strongly entrench'd in the Heart of Man. There are great Passions, a Corruption both strong and deep. We are not able to overcome all this, it is too strong for us, who being so weak cannot do what God here commands us: " Curfed Tongues these, are and Interpreters living according to the will of Satan; Hellish Language, which those shall eternally Curse, that have been so unhappy as to hearken to it, and let themselves be dishearten'd and seduced by it. " Come, let us go up, let us go up, said wisely *Caleb and Joshua*; " let us go up boldly and take Possession of this Land: " For we shall certainly overcome them: If we endeavour to please the Lord, he will bring us into it and give it us. Only let us not rebel against the Lord. Let us not fear these our Enemies, we shall consume them as Bread: God defends them not, and he is on our side. Let us not then be afraid of them. " Thus should all good, well-meaning Persons be excited to true Perfection, and to enter into true and primitive Christianity, how far soever they may as yet be from it. They should be early dispos'd that way, and be told, there is no being a Christian upon any lower terms, and shew them the way and the end to be very possible by the help of God's Grace: How happy

happy a thing had it been to have instructed them as these wise Leaders did the *Israelites*: *Hear, O Israel you approach this Day unto Battle against your Enemies, let not your Hearts faint, &c.* Hear all you that intend to be Christians, and to be born again; you go to fight against your Enemies, the Devil, the World and the Flesh, your Vices and Sins, and all your Imperfections: Let not your Heart be faint, fear not; be not dismay'd nor affrighted at their strength and numbers: For the Lord your God goes along with you, to fight for you against your Enemies, and to save you. We shall conquer them: *For he that is in us is greater then he that is in the World, and in Hell too.* But if there be any of you that has built an House, betroth'd a Wife, or planted a Vineyard, and that would willingly enjoy them; if any one that loves his House, his Goods, his Ease, and his Pleasures, e'en let him go and return to the World, lest he lose his belov'd conveniencies, and that another do not enjoy them who is faint-hearted and fearful? Let him go and return to his House, lest his Brethrens Heart faint as well as his. Had this course been follow'd, the Doctrine of Christian Perfection, and the Practice of it would not now have been so rare and strange a thing; and we should have known by the effects that true Regeneration is a state no less perfect than possible.

XLV. I easily foresee some may be very ready to take me up here, and say; but do you, that talk so resolutely of these fine things, find them by your own Experience as possible and practicable as you represent them to others? I answer, that the Confession of my own personal failure herein ought not to be a rule to me or others, much less should it be made a pretence to judge of the difficulty of the thing itself, with relation to God. and those that faithfully Co-operate with him. For my own part, I shall make no such Inferences; on the contrary, tho' Evil sticks as yet but too close to the ground of my Heart, nevertheless as, by God's Grace, it begins to be there discover'd and hated I hope he that has begun this good Work in me, will perfect it against the Day of *Christ*, till the time that *Jesus Christ* shall come, and be born in

Chap.
IX.

Deut.
20.

1 John
4. 4.

XLV.

We must
not Despair.

in

Chap.
IX.

in my Soul, where I trust I shall hold and embrace him as in his Temple before I see Death. Why should I dishearten my self by casting away all hope, and looking upon this as a thing impossible? My Enemies are already but too strong for my weakness, tho' I do not likewise discourage my self and give them this notable advantage, to take them for invincible, even by the Grace of God itself. I will never thus contumeliously treat my God, as to think the Devil mightier than he is, and my Corruption stronger than his Grace. I will look upon his Victory in me as very possible, and will wait for his Salvation, tho' I were to die in this hope, and were my weaknesses a Thousand times greater than they are. *The Lord giveth Power to the faint, and to him that hath no might he increaseth strength. Even the Yowhs shall faint and be weary, and the Young Men shall utterly fall. But they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with Wings as Eagles, they shall run and not be weary, and they shall walk and not faint. I had fainted unless I had believ'd to see the Goodness of the Lord in the Land of the Living. But wait thou on the Lord, O my Soul: And he shall strengthen thy Heart. Wait I say on the Lord.*

XLVI. Others it may be will say, see this is the Heresy of the *Enthusiasts*, of the *Illuminated*, and the *Perfectists*, and he's altogether taken with it, and deadly fond of it, Amen. O lovely and divine Heresy! O Jesu the Arch-heretick and Head of this Heresy. who hast said, *Be ye Perfect as your Heavenly Father is Perfect*; make me O my God, make me one of these Hereticks; let me be in the Heresy of him that *fulfilleth all in all*; and that does *above what we ask or think*. King of Power at this rate make me a Perfectist, a Fanatick, and Heretick: For thou canst: I believe it. Yes, Lord, I have believ'd and therefore have I spoken. Be it unto me according to my Faith! 'Tis not what I expect from my own strength but from thine: Thou art my strength and my hope: suffer me not to be disappointed of my Hope; nor let my Soul return empty. O Light more powerful than my Darkness! O Humility of my God more central and deep than my Pride! O Love divine more piercing and internal

internal than my self-love, make my Heart know and feel what thou art. How strong and armed soever the evil one is that has corrupted this Heart, and made thereof his fort and nest of Iniquity, yet art thou incomparably stronger than he; thou canst bind and disarm him, spoil and take to thy self both his place and arms wherein he trusted: Were nothing to be consider'd but the bottomless deep of my own Cowardliness and Miseries, I might well despair, did not an infinite Majesty on the other Hand interest himself in the business, who has all Power in Heaven and on Earth, who speaks and the Mountains quake, and the Deep flies from before him, to whom all the Nations of World are but as the drop of a Bucket, and a grain of Sand, and that can with ease change the Heart of a poor Worm of the Earth. If thou wilt, thou canst make me perfectly clean. Say the Word, and be it to me according to thy Word! For to God nothing is impossible. O when will the time come when I shall be able to say with Truth, that I am arriv'd to this Heresy, which is, O my God, the only promotion I desire and hope for in this Life: How happy should I be could I attain it! and how little should I value all things else!

*Of the whole World the scoffs and scorn,
With heedless smiles I'd then return,
The empty projects of weak Heads despise;
Their worthless favours, harmless injuries.*

C H A P. X.

Of PERSEVERANCE.

I. Pre-
destinati-
on a
Source of
Errors,
and a-
mong
others, of
absolute
Perseve-
rance.



I. **T** remains that something be said of Perseverance, which is one of the last things in the Operation of God, and Co-operation of Man in this Life. They that maintain Predestination in the Sense wherein it is by us oppos'd, must absolutely hold the necessity of Persevering, when we have once been, I do not say, Regenerate, but if we have ever had true Faith. The reason of this Connexion is evident; for if Predestination be an infallible Decree concerning the Eternal Life of some certain particular Persons, and the Death of certain others; such as are particularly Predestinated to Salvation must necessarily die in the true Faith which they had in their life-time. And so by this first step Men were forced into the Doctrine of Perseverance: Thence they came in the second place to maintain, that not only the Predestinated persever'd in the Faith, but also that Faith could not cease by a total and final Extinction; and then, that none of the Non-Predestinated either ever had or could have true Faith; and still on from one Error to another. After this, they put the Texts of Scripture to the Rack to force them to speak the quite contrary to their meaning, as shall by and by be shewn in some few Instances. But first of all we shall say something fundamental about this Doctrine, yet not so as to make a common Place of it, or a nauseous Repetition of what has been but too often already said over and over again, save only what may be absolutely necessary, and what my thoughts shall suggest to me; for in the search and contemplation of Truth, I take my Eyes off from all that Men have said.

II. 'Tis

II. 'Tis certain (this by way of Preamble, but not foreign to the purpose) 'tis I say certain, that if in the government of our own or others Souls, there be any Rock to be avoided, 'tis not to entertain them with any Doctrines that may throw them into *Security* on one hand, or into *Despair* on the other. Not but that these Passions, if they may be so stiled, may have their proper Season and Place; for, in Life Eternal there will be perfect security, to which we may justly give ourselves up; and in Hell a just Despair, which 'twould be vain and to no purpose to pretend to remove or lessen; but in this Life 'tis certain that *Security* and *Despair* are Sheives the most destructive to Salvation that we can possibly split upon. The one, *Security*, commonly begets Negligence and Prophaneness; *Despair*, with the same Negligence, Horrors and Blasphemy and Imprecations against the Divine Goodness; and both of them, Damnation.

II. *Security and Despair are dangerous Rocks. What may be the true grounds of them.*

Now thinking with my self what should be the Root of these fatal Fruits, *Security* and *Despair*, I find it must needs be some mistake or some false supposition concerning somewhat that is unchangeable; for if the Foundation of *Security* was changeable, *Security* would no more be *Security*, therefore the Foundation of a bad *Security*, I mean of *Security* in this Life, must be some mistake in our apprehensions of God and of his ways, and not in our Thoughts about the State of Man; Man being of himself confessedly changeable; therefore whatever Men think of him (whether right or wrong) that can give no full and absolute grounds of *Security*, any more than of *Despair*. Suppose falsely, for Example, that Man by his Free-Will had the Power to be converted and sav'd when he pleas'd: This will indeed cause a kind of *Security*; but not a full, rational, and grounded one; but a *Security* against which there lie many Exceptions, such as these, that Man is changeable, that he is not always in a condition to choose; that Distractions, Sleep, Custom, Suddain Death, by which we may every Minute be surpriz'd, may seize him, and damn him if he be found in a careless State. The same Error, that Man's Salvation depends on his own Pleasure, may likewise cause some *Despair* when we consider human Frailty; but the

Chap. X. the sole consideration of mutability, indifferent to good and evil, may somewhat qualify this Despair. But it will not be so when Security or Despair are founded on erroneous Principles concerning something that is immutable; and these Principles are look'd upon as true, and we are in no concern at all either to hide or soften the just consequences of them. In this case there is no avoiding a full Security that stands upon Reason, nor an absolute Despair.

III. Nothing so proper a foundation of Security and Despair as the Doctrine of Predestination and Perseverance. Upon solid and close Reasoning these will be the consequences.

III. Now I do affirm, That if there be any Erroneous Principle concerning matters Divine, that may be a Foundation of Security and Despair, 'tis the Doctrine of Predestination and Perseverance in the Sense they are oppos'd by us, as most pernicious Errors: For put the case, a Man receives for truth these two things: The first, That God has precisely Predestinated all and every particular Person, some (and that incomparably the greater part) to Death and others to Life: The other, That this Predestination is unchangeable; that none of the Predestinated to Death ever shall or can be sav'd; and that none of the Predestinated to Life shall be damn'd. I say this Doctrine lays a Foundation so favouring Security and Despair, that 'tis impossible the Wit of Man or Devils should find more plausible pretences, or more firm ones for these two dreadful Conditions. Let any one try if he can, and let us see them, and I shall own my Ignorance. Nor is it only not possible to find more plausible Grounds for Security and Despair; but I also maintain, That these are Grounds of them so firm, that 'tis impossible for one that Reasons aright and consequentially, and will seriously and strongly make the Application of these Principles, ever to deliver himself out of the Security or Despair into which he must necessarily fall; whatever device he shall make use of for that purpose.

IV. Why the effects hereof are not so visible.

IV. I shall presently be told, my Propositions are by Experience found false; nothing being more notorious than that of Millions that hold these Principles which I call erroneous, there are scarce Twenty, or may be fewer, that fall into these Extreame, either of full Security or absolute Despair. The fact is what we shall not Dispute; though as to Security 'tis a pest that the greatest part, 'tis to be fear'd, are infected with.

Chap.

X.

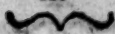


with. But supposing this be not so, I say this proceeds from Mens Indolence and Insensibleness of things that concern their Salvation and Damnation: They take not these things to Heart; they let themselves be distracted and busied about things visible, not attending to those that are Eternal and Spiritual, and much less to the Consequences of them. Now in this State there is no judging of the Consequences or Fruits of a Doctrine with respect to Men; for as they think not of them in good earnest, neither the most saving, nor the most erroneous, neither the most lovely nor the most dreadful have any effect on such sort of People, or rather Statues of Men. But suppose one should set himself seriously to consider these matters upon the two forementioned Erroneous Principles: Suppose too that, either Curiosity, or an invincible Propension, or else the Tempter should move him to search into the consequences of them; I say it again, in such case 'tis impossible for him to preserve himself, or that any one else should, from Security or Despair.

V. I shall be told in the second place, that Men ought not so easily or lightly make particular Application of these things; that commonly 'tis good not to think of them, and beside, that we should have a care to search and pry too narrowly into the Divine Matters and hidden Mysteries, and so these Shelves will easily be avoided. These are but frivolous Evasions: For first, an inquisitive Genius, or one that has a strong fancy to it, or is under Temptation, can not put out of his Mind what he is told are Eternal Truths, matters of Faith, things of everlasting consequence, and the first Principles of Life and Death. Secondly, if Men are not to make Application of these Principles to themselves, nor to draw Consequences from them; to what purpose is it to speak of them, to propose and recommend them almost as Articles of Faith? Were they true, we should recommend the Meditation and Study of them, and of all their Consequences; for nothing but what was both desirable and edifying could ever follow from them. True indeed, some divine Mysteries are not to be too deeply search'd into; but they are generally such as relate to God and God alone, and not such Truths as

V. Vain
and fruit-
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to take off
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Chap.
X.



VI. That
it is im-
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sist on
these
Principles
to avoid
the dis-
mal con-
sequences
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are the Principal Source of Eternal Life and Death. In short, there needs no deep searching to come to these Consequences, no heating ones Brain with abstracted and profound Speculations; they are consequences clear, evident, and flowing immediately from these Principles, and are apparent to all the World upon never so little attention.

VI. For 'tis natural to every one, after having thought of the Doctrine of a particular and unchangeable Predestination to Life and to Death, to conclude, First, That this concerns them in particular, and so, that they are already and from Eternity determinately and unalterably destinated to Life, or to Death; and unless they apply one of these two Members of this Dilemma to themselves, they must needs be in a doubt, fluctuation and uncertainty, incomparably greater than that which is objected to the opposers of Predestination, and of the certainty whether we are, and whether we shall persevere in, the state of Grace? and if we make the Application on the side of the unalterable Predestination to Life it's natural from thence to fall into Security; " For in short, if " I am unalterably Predestinated to Life, will a Man " say, let what will happen, I shall be sav'd at last! " True, but it must be by the means that God has " appointed: Now these means are Faith working by " Love, their Prayers and Endeavours, and the rest. " Let it be so, will the Person we are speaking of say, " Yet if I am destinated to Life by these means, I am " destinated likewise to these means, to this Faith, " these Works, to these Endeavours, to the Time, " and all the Circumstances of them; 'tis God that " must unalterably do all this according to other de- " terminate and unalterable Decrees, by a Power and " Force irresistible. Why then should I trouble my self " about it? What have I to fear in the matter, and " to what purpose is it for me to take all this pains " at present? All shall infallibly be brought about be- " fore I die, though but a day before; and that's " enough: At present I am not determin'd by an in- " fallible decree to endeavour to pray, &c. If I " were, 'twere impossible but I should do it; and if " at present I am not, 'tis as impossible that I should.

" This

Chap.
X.

" This will fall out in its own time. Mean while
 " I'll take my course; I can do nothing but what is
 " unalterably decreed and determin'd, and which must
 " necessarily end well, seeing I am Predestinated to
 " Life by an irrevocable Decree. But, 'twill be said
 " to him, this Disposition of yours ought to make
 " you fear your Reprobation or Damnation. How so,
 " will he reply? Will my Disposition, my Endeavours,
 " my Pains alter God's Decrees, so that if I
 " am destined to Life, and then grow careless, God
 " will afterwards destinate me to Death. If it be so,
 " then farewell the immutability of Decrees; and if
 " not, I have nothing to fear. Or am I not to ground
 " the assurance of my Salvation but upon the uprightness
 " of my Life? This would be right if the reason
 " or occasional Cause, if you please, why God
 " will have some and not others, were grounded on
 " their Conversation; but you tell me 'tis upon a good
 " Pleasure and a divine Decree, unchangeable and
 " prior to all this; and why am I not to draw my
 " assurance from this true and immutable Cause?
 " This Decree, I grant, is to me unknown; but if I
 " knew it, should I be therefore ever the less in Security
 " or in Despair? and if I do not know it, there
 " being but one choice necessary to be made between
 " the things of Eternal Moment wherein I am concerned,
 " and whereof one is already eternally concluded and fix'd
 " concerning me, and it being not in my Power not to be
 " perswaded of the one or the other, who shall hinder
 " me from perswading my self that I am destined to Life, &c. And
 " this I can do with the less Scruple, in that I have
 " been often taught a Doctrine by which I understand
 " that those that are Predestinated to a happy end, are
 " Predestinated to the means, and that these very means
 " are infallibly fix'd in all their Circumstances; so that
 " some of the Predestinated to the end are not Predestinated
 " to have the Means, Faith, Endeavours, Prayers, but at the
 " end of their Life, it may be on their Death-Bed; nothing
 " of all this can be altered.

" Besides, shall I have any more ground of assurance
 " when I do my endeavour to live so circumspectly?

X 2

" I have

Chap.

X.

“ I have on the other hand been taught, that if one
 “ is not Predestinated to Life, all his Endeavours, his
 “ Prayers, Faith and Works, are Vertues but for a
 “ time only, and shall not hold out to the end ; and
 “ ’tis a question whether these Vertues be not sins in
 “ the Unregenerate or Non-Predestinate : Others as-
 “ sure me, that though a Man be habitually Righte-
 “ ous, and does all he can to obtain of God Graces
 “ that are necessary for him, God is often wanting to
 “ him in his need, and suffers him to fall ; so that all
 “ his Endeavours are in vain, and must be so if these
 “ Graces depend on new particular Decrees ; More-
 “ over I am told by others (as the Jansenists) that if
 “ one is not Predestinated to Life, though he had true
 “ Faith, and true Righteousness, it would all come
 “ to nought, and indeed they that distinguish the Gift
 “ of Perseverance from the Nature of Faith and of a
 “ good Life, do by consequence destroy all endeavours
 “ after good works as well as others ; for unless I am
 “ Predestinated to Perseverance, what good will Faith
 “ with all its effects do me ? and if I am destinated to
 “ it, all will come in due time ; the moments are all
 “ set down : Would you have me prevent God and
 “ disturb his Order ? What just and satisfactory An-
 “ swer can be given to these difficulties, which are
 “ not only in the Mouths of the Prophane, but in the
 “ Minds of many good People, that are thereby led in-
 “ to Carelessness and Security, or else into unspeakable
 “ Conflicts and Troubles of Mind, which they would
 “ really avoid had they but better Principles.”

VII.

’Tis im-
 possible
 for others
 to avoid
 Despair
 upon
 these
 Pinci-
 ples.

VII. But if a Man be threatned with the loss of his
 Salvation, and he upon that falls into the Doctrine of
 Reprobation ; nothing can be more sad nor more in-
 curable than the State of such a Soul as long as it is
 resolved to follow the just Consequences of these
 Principles. This lost poor *Spira* after his perswasion
 that he had sin’d against the Holy Ghost, and that this
 sin was both unpardonable, and a certain mark of un-
 alterable Reprobation. “ What will they say to one
 “ under this Temptation, and who shall say, there is
 “ an immutable Decree of Reprobation, and determi-
 “ ned from all Eternity, which takes in by much the
 “ greater Part of Mankind. There is therefore much
 “ greater

Chap.
X.

“ greater likelihood that a certain particular Person
 “ as I am, is irrevocably destin’d to Damnation rather
 “ than to Life. ’Tis in vain to tell me, that I ought
 “ to stir up my Faith, and to take Courage from the
 “ goodness of God, &c. Idle talk ! how can I do this
 “ if I am destin’d to be unbelieving, and so to continue,
 “ and if this cruel and envious God, who might if he
 “ would, have destin’d me to Grace and Life, and
 “ have been ne’er the poorer for it, or I any unfitter
 “ than others, yet on purpose would not, out of an
 “ arbitrary Will, which I cannot but eternally curse
 “ and abhor? My Faith, my Vertues, and whatever I
 “ had is now all ceas’d, and which possibly I may yet
 “ recover, are things only for a time, seeing I am not
 “ destin’d to true Faith nor to Righteousness that shall
 “ persevere. ’Tis certain, that this Despair and these
 Blasphemies are the natural and just Consequences of
 the Application of the false Principles we are discour-
 sing of to ones own particular case, according to which
 it is an hundred times more probable that one is not
 Predestinated to Life, to Faith and Perseverance, than
 that he is ; for we are taught, that those whom God
 has Predestinated to Eternal Death are innumerable more
 than those he has Predestinated to Life, to Faith and to
 Perseverance. I am not ignorant that when they speak
 of this dreadful Predestination, and of its two kinds,
 they make choice of softer and smoother Terms to
 gild over the Pill with ; but at the bottom it comes
 all to this, and in truth something worse, were I mind-
 ed to discover the whole of it.

VIII. To prevent these two deadly consequences, of VIII.
Security, which is follow’d by *Carelessness* and *Pro-* How to
phaneness, and of *Despair*, that is attended with avoid
Blasphemy: First, The idle fancy that God has made these
determinate Decrees concerning every Man in particu- Rocks,
lar, must be renounced. Secondly, So must this Error and in-
injurious to God, that God Wills not equally and hear- thereof
tily the Salvation of all Men, but has excepted the to beget
greatest Part. And lastly, it must be shewn, that if a lively
God on one side does present, perseveringly and im- hope of
mutably, Grace, Salvation, Life, Ways and End, yet Salvation
it is on condition that Man shall freely admit and keep

Chap.
X.



them within himself, if he intends to enjoy them, and not otherwise.

And so, on God's side, Man will find Reason for a perfect *Assurance*, and undoubted certainty; but on the other hand, on the side of his own Frailty he will see cause of uncertainty and of great *fear*, but not of absolute Despair; for frail Man being changeable, is capable of becoming happy as well as miserable. Now these two things will temper one the other; the consideration of the unchangeable and powerful Will which God has to save us, will moderate the extream Fear which the sight of our own Infirmary and nothingness gives us; and our casting our Eyes upon this Impotence and Weakness of ours, will moderate the confidence which the Consideration of God inspires us with. Here will therefore be an assurance and an uncertainty, that is, a *fearing assurance*.

Now if the Reasons of Fear or Uncertainty were greater than those of Assurance, or if but equal, this would be an half-miserable State, and rather uncertain than otherwise; but when on one side we have infinite and unchangeable Reasons of confidence, and on the other the Reasons of the Fear we are in are but finite, mutable, and easy to be surmounted, 'tis plain that the result of this should be not an absolute security or Certainty, nor an absolute Despair, but a *lively hope to Persevere, or a Perseverance morally certain*. Which is what we come now to speak of.

IX. Perseverance is not a Gift, the Essence whereof is individed.

IX. The first thing to be observ'd herein, is, that Perseverance does not consist in some Vertue or Thing, the Essence and Nature of which may be contain'd or possess'd entire, and all at once, at the same time, in an instant, in an indivisible and cumulative manner. Faith, for Example, and Charity are Vertues we may possess entire in every instant of time; now, and every instant following, we may have Faith and Charity whole and in substance. But it is not so with Perseverance, it is no undivided quality; it is not of the Nature of those things whose Essence is contain'd in an indivisible Point and in an instant. And this is to be well observed, to avoid falling into the fond Imagination that Perseverance were to be had as some special Gift of God, a Supernumerary one, and distinct from all the rest,

rest, a Gift that God may give his Saints when he pleases, some Years afore their Death, by vertue of which Gift all their Vertues necessarily continue firm and fix'd. But it is not so. Perseverance on God's Part is nothing but the Offer, the Presence and the Operation of his Grace, his Light, his Love, and his Governance while they continue and last; and on Man's part it is the admission of them in Resignation to God, as long as this Admission and Resignation last and continue.

X. A second thing to be observed, is, that if Perseverance consists, as indeed it does, in a continual course of a mutual Commerce between God and Man; to judge aright of the certainty or uncertainty of it, the positive Reasons we find here both on God's part and on the sanctify'd Souls, and also the Reasons of doubt that there may possibly be either on one side must be considered. * I think I have somewhere before set down certain Truths that may serve and suffice to explain this: Yet I shall here make some particular Application of them.

Chap.
X.

X. How
to judge
aright of
the cer-
tainty
or un-
certainty
of Per-
seve-
rance,

* Occg.

Army of Sin, ch. iiii. n. 14, 15.

XI. On the part of God, the offer of his Grace during this Life, the Presence, and the inward Operation of this Grace when it is admitted, are immutably and durably persevering as to the reality and substance of the thing. The Degrees, Perceptions and Sensations, may indeed change and discontinue; because it is God's Will that this should be regulated according to the Dispositions of the Creature, which being mutable, may cause great variation in these Perceptions and Sensations; but in substance, the Grace of God is offer'd during this Life to every one without Exception and without Discontinuation, and in substance it is present, dwells, and on its part works in the Heart of all those that have given it Admission without Exception and without Discontinuation, God having a serious, true and real Design to work Perseveringly and to all Eternity in the Heart, that has once introduced him into itself. And this is what I am to prove,

XI. On
God's
side, the
offer and
the con-
tinuation
of
Grace
persevere
immut-
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XII. The
Doctrine
of Pre-
destination
denies in
the first
Head
Perseve-
rance on
God's
part.

XII. The first of these things, the Offer of Grace, presented to all that have not admitted it, (which is Antecedent to any Disposition on their side) and the Perseverance of this Offer of Grace, this, I say, is what is disowned by the Abettors of Modern Predestination. If they deny the generality of the Offer of Grace, much more must they deny God's Persevering in the universal Offer of this Grace. 'Tis true, they say, at least the *Sublapsarians*, that God offer'd his Grace to all Men universally in the Person of *Adam*; but after the Fall, they oppose and destroy the Divine Perseverance in this Offer, teaching, that God did not go on with his Design, and that he resum'd but half of it; Why do I say half? the Tenth, the Hundredth or the Thousandth part; for 'tis not his Will, they say, to resume and continue the Offer of his Grace but to a very small number, quite breaking it off as to the greatest part. So that according to these Principles, God let drop his first Designs, purely because he would, whereas he might have continued them without any Inconvenience.

And now let them still go on to press us with Arguments to maintain the Erroneous Perseverance of Security, and ground them on the consideration, that God's Decrees, or Designs are immutable! Yet here they make them mutable, and actually chang'd from their good beginning, in one of the main Points. This instance, 'tis true, does not reach the *Supralapsarians*; but then the Doctrine of the *Supralapsarians* is still worse than that of the *Sublapsarians*, though it hang better together upon the Erroneous Principles of absolute, determinate and simple Fatality of every thing by God's Decree. Intending to discourse in the following Treatise of the universality of Grace, and of the Perseverance of this universality after the Fall, I shall in the remaining part of this Chapter treat of Perseverance only in relation to the Grace of Presence and Operation in itself.

XIII. To
say, the
Grace of
God may
sometimes
be wanting
to any of
the Righteous
that use
their best
endeavours,
is to oppose
the Perseverance
of God.

XIII. This kind of Perseverance taken from the consideration of God, and on his part, is yet unjustly oppos'd

oppos'd

oppos'd by those very Men that defend an absolute and infallible Perseverance: What Perplexities does Error cast them into that follow it! For in effect these very Men that teach that God gives the Predestinate an infallible Perseverance, do themselves say, that God does on his part sometimes with-hold his necessary Graces from the Righteous, tho' they on their part do all they can to obtain them; and so according to them, the Grace of God fails and discontinues sometimes on God's part in the Saints. This Proposition is what I take to be a Principle of Despair, and in itself direct Blasphemy, let their intention be never so good that defend it. 'Tis true, some of them tell us, that God's Grace does not discontinue or cease finally; and others, that it does not so much as discontinue wholly, but only in part; but 'tis still a discontinuation, a ceasing, a Non-Perseverance on God's part: be it total or not, it is unbecoming the Divine Constancy and Immutability. And some falls being, upon these Principles, absolutely unavoidable, this makes us lose or lessen the Courage with which we should guard against and resist all sins whatever; for may be, says a Man, such and such a sin, to which I find myself inclin'd, is one of those against which God will not give me his Grace, let me do what I will; and may be not; but however it be, yet 'tis but a *may be*, a state of wavering, and far from that of a firm and lively hope.

XIV. Let us say then, that God on his part never fails either finally, or wholly, or in part, to persevere to give internally to those in whom he dwells, his Graces, sufficient and necessary for the avoiding of sin. First, Because God hating sin in the highest Degree, cannot cease on his part to resist it in those wherein he dwells, and most sufficiently guard the Sanctuary of the Soul he resides in against it. Should God fail to defend his place that is so dear to him, and that has cost him so much? Would he in sport suffer a breach to be made in it, and let his irreconcilable Enemy enter it, though the Soul do its Duty, and use all possible Endeavours to secure it? A manifest Error! 'twere to be wish'd that all that comes from Rome were as right as the Condemnation of the first

Chap.
X.

XIV.
That God never fails to persevere in the Offer and Gift of his Grace. First Reason, his Supervenient conversion to sin.

of

Chap.
X.

XV. Second a Reason of God's Perseverance, his immutability.

of the Five famous Articles, which comes in substance to this Errour, and is really a dreadful Doctrine.

XV. A second Reason of the Divine Perseverance of the Presence of inward and sufficient Grace, is, the Constancy and Immutability of God in his Nature, which is then present in the bottom of the Soul; in his Purposes and Decrees, which are to communicate himself to the faithful; in his Acts, his Gifts, his fatherly Love towards those that he adopts for his Children by a second Birth; and in the Covenant and Contract of spiritual Marriage, which he renews with the Soul wherein he dwells. I might, were it necessary, insist upon all these, and from each particular draw a several Argument, and so we should have here five or six more Reasons to assure us of the Perseverance of Grace.

XVI. Third Head of Reasons for the Divine Perseverance, drawn from the consideration of Jesus Christ.

XVI. A third ground of Assurance of this Divine Perseverance arises from the Consideration of *Jesus Christ*, who has ask'd it, merited, and obtain'd it, and continually interceeds for the continuation of it. No one can doubt but these Offices and Employments belong to *Jesus Christ*, after the Scripture has in an hundred Places asserted it. Nor are we here to object that *Jesus Christ* ask'd, merited, obtain'd, pray'd not for all. That Difficulty cannot come in yet; we are here speaking of Grace embrac'd and admitted, and so, none but Believers and Saints are concerned in this, and without Dispute, 'tis for them that *Jesus Christ* did, and still does employ himself, as was said; now it can not be imagin'd that this is all to no purpose, and that God, his Father, denies him his Request. If he grants it, as certainly he does, the Divine Grace is Perseveringly present on God's part to those that have once given it admission.

XVII. Fourth cause: that Jesus Christ is the head of his, and that they are his Members.

XVII. A fourth Reason of Perseverance, is, because *Jesus Christ* is not only the Mediator of Intercession for this Grace, but is also the Mediator of the distribution of it, and the sacred Vein through which it passes from him to his Members. Now who could think that the Members should ever fall into faintness, or decay for want of Influences necessary to their Con-

dision

dition and Conduct; and for this Reason that such a head was wanting to supply them. This cannot be thought without doing despite to *Jesus Christ*, which no good Man can ever design; and so not standing to prove at large what I trust is questioned by none, I shall content my self with this single Passage of *St. Paul*, *Jesus Christ is our chief and our head. And from him it is that the whole Body, the Parts whereof are with so exact Proportion join'd and united together, receives by Vessels and Ligaments which convey the Spirit and the Life, growth which he communicates to it according to the measure proper to each Member, that it may be form'd and built up in Love.*

Chap.
X.

Eph. 4.
15, 16.

XVIII. A Fifth cause of this Divine Perseverance of the Grace of God in such as have receiv'd it, is the care that *Jesus Christ* and his Father both take to improve and maintain their saving Gifts in their Children after they have given them. This saying, *My Father worketh hitherto and I work also*, is much more applicable to the inward than outward World. It appears from the Protestations that *Jesus Christ* makes to his Father, that he has so great a care of those his Father had given him out of the World, that none of them were lost but the Son of Perdition: that is, he that would knowingly and wilfully destroy himself, that the Scripture might be fulfilled, that says, and is one of God's Decrees, *He loved cursing, therefore shall it come upon him: He loved not blessing, therefore shall it be far from him.* 'Tis self-will that makes Sons of Perdition and *Judas's*, and not God's Decree: The Decree only tells what shall follow upon the State they themselves have chosen. But whatever becomes of them and of others, God's Grace is never wanting, were it only for the Reason taken from the cares of *Jesus Christ*, that are inseparably join'd with God's.

XVIII.

Fifth
cause of
the same
truth:
the cares
of *Jesus
Christ*
and of
his Fa-
ther.
John 5.
17.
John 17.
12.
Psalm
109. 17.

XIX. The same truth of the Divine Perseverance may be further grounded upon a new Head, the consideration of Grace itself, of Faith, of Illumination, of Charity, of Regeneration, considering them in themselves as things having a certain Essence and Nature. It is unquestionable that in things of Nature there is

XIX. 4

Sixth
head of
Proofs of
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vine Per-
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rance, the consideration of Grace itself.

none

Chap.
X.

none that tends to destroy itself, and they ever go on to their own Preservation and Perfection. Now Grace and Faith being things Divine and Incomparably more real than any thing in the Universe, how can one conceive that they should of themselves tend to nothingness, to cease to discontinue, to destroy themselves, especially when they are in their Strength, and in a state of Prevalence? Can Things Divine, God himself, and his purest and realest acts have in them this notorious Imperfection to tend to discontinuation? This is contradictory to the Notion of a God most really acting and tending in himself and in his Acts to reality, as well as to a great many places of Scripture, which call the Grace of God, *a water springing up to Eternal Life, and an incorruptible Seed of Regeneration*. And so, on God's side, on *Jesus Christ*, and that of his Grace there is nothing but certainty for Perseverance.

Jo. 7.
38.
1 Pet. I.
23.

XX. Proof
of Per-
severance
drawn
from the
considera-
tion of
Man as
Regene-
rated.

XX. There is yet one more, though not so strong, on Man's side, that has admitted the Grace of God within him; and there is the more ground of certainty or of hope, the more he is advanced in his Spiritual State: So that he that has attain'd to the New Birth and to Manhood in this Holy State, is upon this score as certain as 'tis morally possible he can be, that he shall by God's Grace Persevere; for he is in the Light which shews him good and evil, truth and darkness, and their Consequences; he has tasted them both; and the Holy Spirit has given him abhorrence and disgust of evil and lies; and love, delight, joy and peace for the good and the light; and of this he has an Habit, and Grace continually strengthens and encreases his delight in good, and his Vertuous Habits. In this state, 'tis morally impossible such a one should turn away from the Light which he sees, which he knows and feels to be good and perfect, to prefer and embrace darkness and evil which he knows; nor is he ignorant of their Consequences, and to which the bottom of his Heart has an holy Repugnance. 'Tis impossible such a one upon serious Thoughts of all these things, should not rejoice in Spirit, and sing with an holy hope to persevere. *Who shall separate us from the Love of God? For I am perswaded that neither Death, nor Life, nor Principality nor Powers, nor things present nor things*

Rom. 8.
35.

to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other Creature shall be able to separate me from the Love of God. Chap. X.

The Regenerate may so fall as to perish finally.

XXI. I but just now called the impossibility of ceasing and falling, a *moral Impossibility*, and not an absolute one, just as the steadfastness and certainty of Perseverance is but a moral and not an absolute one. Were there none but God, *Jesus Christ* and the Divine Grace, concerned in the Matter, Perseverance would be absolutely sure, and the impossibility to fall from it would be Absolute and Physical, as 'tis call'd. We have seen indeed that all the Reasons drawn from this side, from God, from *Jesus Christ*, and from his Grace, have a positive tendence to Perseverance. But forasmuch as Man ought to concur with all this, with the freedom of his Consent and Co-operation; and there being on his side no certainty but what is grounded on his Habits; and his Acts being free, and there being in his Body, and in the World, occasions of Distraction and Falling, 'tis absolutely possible that he may fall from the Grace of God, and be lost too; and this is no more than what has, and will again happen more than once. They that are for Predestination will loudly cry out against this. But leave we them and endeavour to understand the grounds of the Truth.

XXII. When a thing depends only on another that is immutable, 'tis, no doubt, sure and persevering, if the thing it depends on be so itself. Nor need any trouble themselves to bring Instances against the generality of this Proposition: For the use I make of it 'tis enough, if it be true, in things most divine and real, as those of Grace are; which every body ought to grant me. And from hence 'tis that we have seen that on God's side there was full Assurance to Persevere; or that the divine Gifts persever'd in him that has them in him. But when a thing consists in the result of two different things, one whereof is naturally immutable, and the other naturally mutable, 'tis evident, the Assurance to Perseverance can in this case be only Moral; for that one of

XXI. That the Regenerate may fall from Grace and be lost for ever.

XXII. Reasons of the truth of this founded on the concurrence and mutability of Man's Liberty.

Chap. of the two things that concur to the effect, is sup-
 X. posed to be essentially mutable and indifferent. There-
 fore, one of these things being always essentially free and
 indifferent, it may always govern itself conformably to
 this mutability, and to the impressions that ill objects shall
 make upon it. Therefore it may absolutely fall, and its
 impotence to fall is only moral, not absolute.

XXIII. XXIII. It will be said I make false Suppositions a-
 bout Liberty, and it may be about the concurrence
 of Man. We shall therefore prove what we ad-
 vance.

The Pos- 1. A gift properly so call'd, cannot be consummate
 session of and compleat but by the concurrence of two Persons,
 Grace is one alone being not enough: For one must give, and
 a thing the other accept: If he that sustains the Person of the
 to which receiver will not receive, 'tis in vain for the giver to
 two dif- give over and over again, the gift would in effect be
 ferent Be- void. This is so true that, through all Eternity, where-
 ings do in God gives himself and all his Treasures to his be-
 concur. lov'd, the gift would be void did they not accept it:
 Nor will it be otherwise valid and ratified but by the
 Saints acceptation of it. Much more is this true in
 this Life. And so one of my Suppositions is prov'd,
 that the possession of Grace, which is a Gift, and a con-
 tinual and ever-renew'd one, is, what two different
 beings, God and Man, ought to concur in.

2. One of 2. The second Principle is, that one of these two
 these Be- Beings, viz. Man, is essentially free, mutable, and in-
 ings is different. Free, none denies that; Mutable, that I can't
 free, mu- tell; possibly they that are for Decrees and Determi-
 table, nations will say, either that Man does not move or
 and in- change himself, but according to particular and immu-
 different. table Decrees; or if he be mutable before he receives the
 Grace of God, yet he is not so afterwards. But as
 these are exceptions that I think ought not to be made,
 so I shall not give my self the trouble to answer them
 at present: The last would make Man impeccable;
 and the first is already destroy'd by the truth of the
 Principles elsewhere laid down. *

* Oec.
 Creat.
 cb. 5. 13.

XXIV. XXIV. But that Liberty consists in indifference, is
 Whether what will not be so readily granted; they that deny
 Liberty consist in indifference.

it,

it, urge the Example of Angels and Saints in Heaven, that are free, say they, and are no longer in indifference; so that nothing hinders but those that have admitted God's Grace may be very free, tho' they be no longer in that sort of mutability which makes the nature of indifference, and might cause them to fall again into Death.

Chap.
X.

In answer to this, I say, first, that 'tis false that Liberty does not consist in indifference, or that it is not in its very essence indifferent: This I think has been thoroughly prov'd in the first Book. * Secondly, I say that 'tis false, to say the Angels and Blessed Saints are not free with the freedom of Indifference. They are entirely so, and so shall they be compleatly to all Eternity. In eternal Life there are infinite objects, infinite perceptions, of joys, of modes, of acting and managing; and here the Saints are and will be indifferent to attend to this or t'other, to do, to perceive, to vary and modify themselves after such a certain manner, or let that alone and do some other thing as they please: Nor will matter be wanting whereby they may give proof of their indifference; and of their Liberty both of contradiction and of contrariety, as the Schools term it. And so, 'tis an untruth to say, we shall not in Eternity be free, whereas they should say we shall be so there more than ever, because there we shall have an infinity of objects, modifications, faculties, and in all of them innumerable differences.

The Liberty being by its essence indifferent, the Saints in Heaven will ever be indifferent in an infinite Number of things.
* ch. 16.

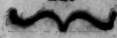
XXV. It will be said, that in Heaven the Blessed Spirits are not indifferent to Sin, and not to Sin, to fall and not to fall; and consequently, that there is not that indifference in Liberty which we say there is; and that in like manner 'tis possible the Faithful or Regenerate, while on Earth, may be no more indifferent to choose Life or Death, to perish or not, tho' in other things they continue free. I will not say in answer to this difficulty (wherein the comparison of the Liberty of a mortal Man with that of the Blessed Spirits is carried a little too far) that thus Man is made almost impeccable, and occasion given to him to aban-

XXV.
To be indifferent, it is not necessary a Man should be able to apply himself to all kinds of objects,

especially when one has no mind to it.

don

Chap.
X.



don himself to Security. I shall say but two things which will deserve our notice, the one, that to be indifferent it is not necessary that one have the Power at one and the same time, to give or apply ones self to all sorts of actual or possible objects, the other, that it is still less necessary to have this power when 'tis against ones will to use it, or when one is actually in a contrary will. This I shall explain by an Example, and then apply it to the Souls in Heaven, and after to the Saints on Earth; and thereby it will be seen, why the Saints in Glory cannot extend their indifference to evil, tho' absolutely speaking they are free with an unlimited freedom of indifference; and why they that live upon Earth, may extend their indifference to Death, and for so doing perish Everlastingly.

XXVI.
Partic-
lar Ex-
plication
of this.

XXVI. Conceive we then, or suppose, if you please, something endued with the freedom of indifference; me, for instance, or any other whatever; must I to be thus free extend this indifference to all sorts of objects, and so be indifferent; for Example, to speak *Chinese* or *Japan*, to see a *Phoenix* or not to see one, and the like? Is it not enough for this, that I can extend as I please my Liberty or Faculty to a multitude of objects that are about me? Is it necessary also to be indifferent, that when I habitually and actually will a thing, and while I continue to will it, that I should yet have the power at the same time to will the contrary? This is inconceivable: And is more than a contradiction in the nature of things. 'Tis in Physicks a contradiction and impossibility that a material thing should be and not be at the same time; but it is yet more impossible to will against ones will; or that one should have the power to be actually willing what one actually wills not.

XXVII.
The Bless-
ed tho'
free and
indiffe-
rent can-
not ex-

XXVII. The Blessed therefore have a freedom of indifference, tho' they cannot extend it to all sorts of objects: Because all sorts of objects are not before them, but of one sort only, viz. None but those that are very luminous, and very good. In the element they are in there is no Ignorance, no Darkness, no evil things,

tend their indifference, to evil nor perish.

Chap.

X.

no Temptations to evil, no Distractions, but Knowledge, Light, Goodness, pleasure in good, motives to good, the divine Goodness and light continually penetrating their Souls and Senses, without the least intermission: Their Understanding ceases not a minute from actually perceiving and receiving the impressions of the Divine Light, nor their Will from receiving the actual motions of the Holy Ghost, join'd with the habitual motions of their Liberty. And so being surrounded with nothing but good, and being continually in the actual perceptions and motions of Light and Goodness, without Distraction; 'tis not possible they should in this state be carried towards things opposite to good: But this hinders not but they may be free to incline themselves indifferently and at their own choice to some sorts of good objects, or nor, but to turn towards other quite different. They are therefore free and indifferent tho' they have not the power to give themselves to what is not as to them, nor to will actually what they actually and perpetually will not. Therefore they are free, and yet cannot Perish.

XXVIII. The same might be said of the Regenerate, XXVIII. whilst they live on the Earth, were they there in the same state, were there no evil objects for them, nor around them, no Ignorance, no Darkness, no deadly Temptations, no Distractions; but a continual presence, reception and sensation of the divine Light and Goodness. It would then be impossible for them to Sin mortally; there would then be an infallible certainty of Perseverance. But is this the state of things at present? Is not Man tho' never so free and regenerate, plac'd amidst good and bad objects? Is he not beset with good and evil, with light and darkness? Is he not, as to many things, in obscurity and darkness? Are there not a Thousand intervals, during which, the impressions of the divine Light and Goodness are actually imperceptible to him? And the sense and perception of good and divine things suspended? And he that while distracted? And evil objects that are then present and sticking to him (as the World and his own Flesh) making impression on his Mind, his Imagination and Senses? What impossibility is there that one in this state of Distraction from the good, and in the

The Saints in this Life may turn their Liberty towards Evil and perish therein.

Chap.
X.



pleasing sensation of evil should apply his Liberty and Consent to what is so present and so sweetly engaging? Now this is his Sin and his Fall; and from this he may fall into a still greater, with much more ease, and so by degrees, and also more easily go down to Hell, that is ready to swallow him up upon his first fall, if he then chance to die.

It will be said, that such a one being accustom'd to good (for we suppose him Regenerate) may easily avoid this Fall, by recovering out of his distraction and recollecting himself in God, who is habitually present to him. I grant he may easily avoid it; but I maintain, that while he is actually distracted from the perception of good, and taken up with the pleasing thought and sensations that a present and lively object make upon him, it is then very possible for his Liberty to turn his Consent that way. Nor can it be understood how this can be denied without denying the nature of Liberty, or making of this World a Paradise, wherein there was nothing but pure good without any mixture of evil.

XXIX.
*To deny
that the
Saints
during
this Life,
may free-
ly give
them-
selves to
Evil, is
to deny
their
Liberty.*

XXIX. To say therefore, that the Saints who are yet in a Life where good and evil are present to them, and beset around them, where they are often distracted from the perception and impression of the one, and have as it were their Body, Senses, Imagination and Mind, penetrated with the impressions, with the agreeable sensations, and with the pressing and deluding insinuations which a present evil make upon them cannot while matters stand thus, give their Consent and Application to this latter, is to make brutes and stocks of them, and to destroy the nature of Liberty; and on the other Hand to confound the state of this World with that to come.

XXX.
*It does
also
confound
the na-
ture of the
Blessed*

XXX. Now all grant that the time of this Life is a time of trial, as well for the Saints as the Wicked. It is so for the Wicked; because God leaves them during this Life between good and evil, to see if they will embrace the one and turn from the other, tho' but towards the end of their Race, and in what state soever

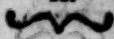
eternity with the time of trial; and to deny this latter, which to do, is but a meer fancy, and sacrifices the Popish Infallibility.

they

they are found at Death, in that they shall continue. 'Tis likewise a time of trial for the good, God's design being to see whether they will abide firm and fixed in the choice they have made of the good.

But what trial would it be on one side or t'other, if there were no passing from evil to good, and if it were impossible to fall off from good to evil, and to Death? Certainly, this is directly to destroy that common notion of a time of trial, and makes it a time of fatality; of despair on one Hand, and of security on the other; of Hell on one Hand and Paradise on the other. Why do they make God do things absurd, useless, and contradictory? *To try*, is, as to what concerns free agents, to put a thing betwixt two contraries, to see which side it will take, and whether it will stedfastly adhere to what it has chosen, and after trial, to set it in the final place prepar'd for it. If there be nothing like this in this Life for Men, why are they not immediately sent home to Heaven, (which is the state of absolute Confirmation in Grace) and others to the Bottomless Pit? Why are they left upon Earth a certain while, which they are told is *a time of trial*, during which the Wicked are exhorted to leave the evil and embrace the good, and the good to stick to the good, and not to return to the evil, with Declarations of what will become both of one and the other if they do not what God exhorts them to; declarations of Death everlasting to the Righteous, if they forsake their Righteousness; of Everlasting Life if they do not forsake it; of Everlasting Death to the Wicked if they persevere in their Crimes, and of Everlasting Life, if they leave them and embrace Righteousness. Is all this trick, and dissimulation, or is it what becomes the Seriousness of a God? Let God be true and sincere, and every Man a liar, and a compleat dissembler, even in his Conceits of an absolute and infallible Perseverance of the Saints. A double Fiction this is, to speak plainly, one, in that the most of the abettors of this Opinion, not believing that there commonly are, or at least for the present, any that can live without Sin, that is, truly Saints; when here they call them *Saints*, to whom they promise Salvation and Perseverance, this Saintship of theirs must needs be Chi-

Chap.
X.



merical; the other, in as much as the conceit of their infallible Perseverance, and that cannot fall away, is a Chimera too; and so to maintain, in their sense, the *Perseverance of the Saints*, is Fiction upon Fiction.

The World was alarm'd at the Bishop of *Rome's* putting in his claim to Infallibility, and at the pretensions of the Councils to it; but 'tis a greater piece of Arrogance for one to imagine himself infallible, while he lives here, as to Life Everlasting, by vertue of having once given up himself to a lively Faith. The former pretend to infallibility only in matters of Speculations and Theory, in certain acts of Judgments, which cannot beget security as to their Salvation: Which is but a small matter in comparison of the pretensions to Infallibility in the grand and infinite concern of Salvation, tho' they own themselves fallible in some matters, and at sometimes. Neither Popes nor Councils ever carried their pretensions so high as I know of; and yet this must be the Priviledge of all those that have Faith, tho' they were to live a Thousand Years in this World! Extravagant presumption!

XXXI.
Recapitulation
of true
Perseve-
rance,
the cer-
tainty
and
means of
it.

XXXI. I am not against the true Doctrine of Perseverance: God forbid. I have said already, and say it again, that on God's part, that on Christ's, and that of his Grace, there is full and infallible certainty; because it will never happen that Salvation should fail on this side, as during the Day it never happens that any one fails of having Light on the Sun's part: But on the part of the Regenerate it is not altogether so. There is indeed, with respect to his good Habits, his Vertues, to the ground of his Heart, and his actual adherence to God, an infallible certainty of his Perseverance, as long as he actually adheres to God: For to adhere to God, is the source of Happiness: But because Man cannot during this Life always actually adhere and cleave to God, being necessarily and invincibly distracted by a Thousand foreign things, some good, others bad, and even very bad; then, in this time, he may easily fall, and so fall as to perill, if he do not presently take care to recollect himself in God upon all occasions. If he accustom himself to this, I mean, to recollect himself in God amidst his distractions, and if he suffer not himself to be

be distracted but upon necessity, 'tis morally impossible but he should persevere, and this is the most firm certainty of Perseverance that can be in this Life, with the most solid and indeed only means of attaining it, I mean, *never to be distracted from God but the least one can, and of necessity; and to use ones self to be recollected in God, in all sorts of occasions and distractions, having our Eyes always towards him, and considering him as every where present.*

But as this may be interrupted and cease, it is evident, that in this World none can be infallibly assur'd of their Perseverance, be they never so great Saints; and that 'tis their Duty to think of it with trembling on one side, and with a lively hope on the other; as also, that no one ought ever to despair of his Salvation on God's part, as if his Grace would fail him, tho' he had exceedingly sinn'd against the Holy Ghost, and committed all the Sins of the whole World, nay, even of Hell itself. In comparison of God and his Grace, all this is nothing: Nor is God in himself in the least hurt by it: But only the Sinner: And an Hundred Thousand Worlds of Sinners and Sins are but as a drop of Water if compar'd with the infinite Ocean of the Divine Goodness, and but as a little stubble to the immense Fire of his Great Love, provided we do with all our Heart cast ourselves into it: But otherwise, both the Sinner and Sin, be they never so little, are an eternal and infinite source of infinite Evils, the least whereof, God, with all his Omnipotence cannot diminish while the will is separated from him. These are terrible Truths of infinite importance, which have for the consequences Hallelujah's on the one Hand, and Everlasting Miseries on the other. God that he may take no advantage against us, nor surprise us in evil, hath forewarn'd the World that he has given them time to think of the choice they have to make; and it is the term of this Life only, wherein they may turn from evil to good and from good to evil.

During this Life no infallible assurance of Perseverance, either for Salvation or Damnation.

XXXII. Does not the Scripture, and both its and God's method of proceeding suppose this, and do they not

XXXII.
Proofs of
this Truth

from several Places of the Holy Scripture, expressly

Chap. expressly, declare as much? I have never seen any of
 X. the works of the Saints, or of such as solidly began to
 be so, wherein we find not Testimonies of their trem-
 bling and fear for their Perseverance: What mean
 these Words of God himself to Moses, *Him that Sins*

Exod. *will I blot out of my Book*; and those of St. John or
 32. 33. *Christ himself, If any Man shall take away from the*
 Rev. 22. *Words of the Book of this Prophecy, God shall take away*
 19. *his part out of the Book of Life, and out of the Holy City.*

Here Men make distinctions between the Book of God
 that concerns the Predestinate and the Book of God
 that concerns the called or the outward Church: Al-
 so, they say, that we are written in God's Book either
 by God himself or by Man, every one is so by his own
 Opinion and by his outward Profession; and that here
 'tis spoken of the Book of the calling, and that writ-
 ing, that every one had made by his Profession. What
 Dreams are these? To say nothing of the certainty of
 the absurdity of this distinction, the application of it
 is utterly false. The Question here is about a Book of
 Life, not of hypocritical and external vocation or pro-
 fession. The business is concerning a Book that God
 had written: *Blot me, said Moses, out of the Book which*
thou hast written: Lastly, 'tis the Book of the Burghers of
 the Holy City, of the Heavenly Jerusalem, as is evident
 from the Words of St. John. Is it not certainly true
 that the glosses made upon these Texts are so violent
 and forced, that were it not for the prejudices Men
 labour under, they could never have thought of such?

What does David mean, when speaking of taking
 heed to his ways, to his actions, and his words, he re-
 strains it by these Words, *While the Evil or the Wicked*
 Psal. 39. *is before me*. Why not always? 'tis because we shall
 1. not always be in a time of falling and perishing. We
 shall not always need to be so wary. And how long
 will it be that we shall? While the Evil is before me,
 says David, that is, while we live on Earth among good
 and evil objects.

XXXIII. But were God minded to teach in the most
 XXXIII. express and formal terms imaginable, that the Rigbre-
 Passage of Ezeckiel. ous may fall from his state of Righteousness and Sal-
 vation and Perish; and that the unrighteous may for-
 fake his state of Death and be saved, how could he
 possibly

possibly do it more clearly than by these Words; If Chap. the Righteous turn away from his Righteousness and commit Iniquity, — for these things he shall die. And when the Wicked turneth away from his Wickedness which he hath committed, he shall save his Soul alive. Repent and turn your selves from all your Transgressions, so Iniquity shall not be your Ruin. Cast away from you all your Transgressions, whereby you have Transgressed, and make you a new Heart and a new Spirit, for why will you die, O House of Israel? I have no pleasure in the Death of him that dieth, saith the Lord God; Turn therefore and ye shall live. The whole 18th Chapter, and good part of the 33d. should be read to understand well the indisputable force of this declaration of God, founded on the truth we are defending. According to the Hypothesis we oppose, God should have said thus. "The Righteous cannot totally fall from Righteousness, or if he do, he shall not die; for he shall recover out of it before he dies, and shall live. And so the Wicked if he be not Predestinated to Life, can never attain to Righteousness, or if he does, he shall fall from it, and shall not be able to live." This is just the contrary to God's Declaration.

And this they see well enough; but endeavour to come off by such glosses as I am almost ashamed to relate. They say God here speaks only of an outward Righteousness and Holiness, and of a Death and Life temporal only. Good God, to what pass are we come! At a time when God abominated the outward Righteousness and Holiness, because it was universally abus'd; at a time when he derided and forbid it; as appears by the first and 57th of Isaiah and by the 8th Chapter of our Prophet; and would he at this very time recommend to them as a principal point, this Hypocritical and Pharisaical Righteousness and Holiness, and as a reward of it, promise them an Earthly Life, on which their Affections were Sinfully placed! But yet further, a Righteousness which consists in the keeping of all the Commandments of God. (v. 19.) a Righteousness by which the Soul is made alive, (v. 27.) a Righteousness whereby a Man has a new Heart and a new Spirit, (v. 31.) a Righteousness whereby he lives in God and escapes Death wherein God has no pleasure,

Eze. 18.
24, &c.

Answer
to the
Exceptions
against
this Passage.

Chap.
X.

XXXIV.
*Excellent
Passage
of Jesus
Christ,
with its
explicati-
on. An-
swer to
Excepti-
ons there-
upon.
Luke 11
21, 22, 24
&c.*

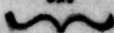
sure (v. 32.) shall this Righteousness be only an outward Righteousness and Holiness? shall this be a Righteousness to which God promises only a carnal Life; and shall a Man escape none but an outward Death by it? Lastly, When God promises to this Righteousness, Life, and threatens Death to them that turn away from it, shall there be only Temporal Rewards and Punishments! O what will not Prejudices do to blind the best Understandings in the midst of Divine Light!

XXXIV. Let us hear yet one word of the Eternal Wisdom and his Apostle. *Jesus Christ*, after he had been speaking of a wicked Man under the Figure of a House wherein a strong and arm'd Man (which is the Devil and Sin) had been master, and then how a stronger (which is the Spirit of *Jesus Christ*) came and entred into that same House, and overcame the strong Man and took from him his Arms and his Dominion; adds, *When the unclean Spirit is gone out of a Man he walketh through dry places, seeking rest; and finding none, he saith, I will return to my House whence I came out. And when he cometh he findeth it swept and garnished. Then goeth he and taketh to him seven other Spirits more wicked than himself, and they enter in and dwell there; and the last state of that Man is worse then the first.* Here we see how the Devil may again become Master in the Hearts that have been purify'd by *Jesus Christ*, and how they may fall into a state of Perdition more terrible than that out of which God had taken them.

But may be 'twill be said, this here is spoken of an External Purification, and of an outside Righteousness and Holiness, and not of that of the Heart. This may be so interpreted when by a *White* we are to understand *Black*; and by the inward Operation of *Jesus Christ* in the Heart, by which the Devil is bound and cast out, we must understand the Devil's work and Dominion in the Soul, under the Hypocritical Mask of Sanctity. Is it not a deplorable thing, that rather then part with some unhappy Prejudices, Men of good Sense and Will too, should give such Interpretations to the Holy Scriptures? This place manifestly treats of the Interior Man, which was defiled, because the Devil

Devil, the unclean Spirit had got within it, and seized upon all its Faculties and Powers, and ruled in them; it treats of the Purification of this Interiour, which was effected by the entrance of *Jesus Christ* into the Heart where *Satan* was; 'tis a Purification consisting in the Victory that *Jesus Christ* by entering into the Heart, gets over *Satan*, taking from him his Power, delivering all the Faculties from his Tyranny, taking them to himself, driving the Devil out of the Heart, and adorning the Interiour with the Spiritual Ornaments of Virtue. And is this indeed nothing but an outward Purity, and not a true Holiness and Righteousness? Does the unclean Spirit go out of Man's Heart by an outward Righteousness? on the contrary, he fixes his abode there, the more under that covert? And when the unclean Spirit, after his going out, finds none but dry and parch'd places, in which he cannot rest, and seeks his rest in this cleans'd House; does not this denote, that the Devil, whose Pleasure and Unlucky rest consists only in troubling and destroying the works of God, finding after his going out of a holy Soul, none but the wicked, that are voluntarily his Servants, this is but a tasteless and dry business to him, and can Minister no matter of that wretched Joy he takes in destroying the work that is as yet God's; and so that to enjoy this unlucky rest, he endeavours to enter again in the Heart wherein God had re-establish'd his Image and his divine Vertues: That coming to spy it, and seeing this Heart in Distraction and Negligence, not watchful over itself, nor keeping the Door of its Mind and Senses exactly shut to all that may present itself, he takes fresh Forces, surprizes this Soul at unawares, becomes more master of it than ever, and finds in the Destruction which he there makes of the work of the Holy Ghost, that Diabolical satisfaction and rest which he could not meet with in all the unclean Souls of the wicked, wherein he saw nothing Divine to destroy? I appeal to the Conscience of all that are able to discern the grossest darkness from the most shining Light, if it be not clearer than the day, that this is what the Holy Spirit designs to deliver by the Mouth of the Son of God, whose divine words we should have more respect for, than

Chap.
X.



XXXV.

Passage of
the Epistle
to the
Hebrews
against
absolute
Perseve-
rance.
Heb. 6.
4.

than to make them say what is either false or ridiculous. Now if this be not utterly to overthrow the presumptuous Doctrine of infallible and absolute Perseverance, I know not what is to be done to overthrow a Doctrine.

XXXV. I shall cite but one or two Passages more, where we shall at the same time see the force of Truth and the force of Prejudices to blind the most clear-sighted, even in the very face of Truth: 'Tis impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the Heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, and have tasted the good word of God and the Powers of the World to come, if they shall fall away to renew them again to repentance, seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame: 'Tis evident that this Passage is directly opposite to the Doctrine of absolute Perseverance, according to which it should have been said, " 'Tis impossible for those that have been once enlightened " ever to fall away, or if they do 'tis impossible but " they should again repent. This is a staring contradiction to St Paul. How do they do to avoid it?

First, They say, this is not meant of those that have had sincere Faith and true Holiness. This is plainly enough to contradict the Apostle, who gives us to understand in the beginning of the Chapter, that he speaks of such as have already laid the foundations and the essentials of Salvation, *viz.* Repentance from dead works, (that is to say, that they are dead to sin) and Faith in God: A Faith following Repentance from dead works, is not that a true and saving Faith? And an Historical Faith, a Faith false and not sincere, is that the Foundation of true Christianity? Now St. Paul, to shew that they who have this Foundation, ought to go on towards Perfection, and not rest in the State of Infancy, supposes, that not to go forward to Perfection is to go backward; and so to hinder these true, but young Believers, from resting in the state of Childhood, that is, to hinder them from going backward, he shews them the horrible danger they throw themselves into, that go back and fall, after having so well and so holily begun. Must I now insist longer on the following Mark to shew that the Persons here spoken of are such as have had true Faith? That this *Illumination*, was no outward glimmering Light, but an inward Operation

Oeconomy
of sin,
ch. xv.
n. 15.

Chap.
X.

of the Holy Ghost? that to *taste of the Heavenly gift*, is not to have seen the Picture of it, but to have received and felt the first Fruits of it in their Interior, *That to have been partaker of the Holy Ghost* is not to have had the Gifts of Miracles, but to have had in their Interior the Spirit of Faith and of Love, who did not distribute his Miraculous Gifts to Hypocrites but only to true Believers? that to *taste the good word of God*, is not to have fine Notions and Speculations about it, but to feel in themselves the true power and reality of this Divine Word? That to *taste the Powers of the World to come*, is not to form in the Brain Ideas concerning Paradise or the Church triumphant, but to experience in themselves the beginnings of Light, of Joy, and of Peace, which they shall have in the State of Glory to come? That to *fall away*, does not signify not to fall from a saving to a damnable state, or never to have stood, and to shew by some outward mark that they never were otherwise then creeping? That to *repent again* notes they had once repented so well, that 'twere to be with'd they cou'd do so again. That to *crucify the Sin of God afresh* implies that the Death and Resurrection of Jesus Christ had already been ratify'd and fulfilled in these People, and that they had been (as the same Apostle speaks elsewhere) *Sanctify'd by the Blood of the Covenant*: And that by renouncing it they profan'd and ignominiously shed it, and *did despise to the Spirit of Grace*, that had therewith Sanctify'd them; so that all this signifies neither the illusions of Self-conceited Hypocrites, nor the pitiful Glosses that are made on, and that directly overthrow the Text? I think it needless to enlarge on things so plain to all that will but remove the Veil of inveterate Prejudice from before their Eyes.

Heb. 10.
29.

Now the impossibility spoken of here by St. Paul, when he says, 'tis impossible to renew these People to Repentance, is not contrary to what we said before, that absolutely speaking, 'twas what might be done, because St. Paul speaks of a moral impossibility, or great difficulty, and not of an absolute impossibility. And that this is a common way of speaking both with Scripture and Men is what all grant.

XXXVI. 'Twould be tedious to alledge all the Places
 XXXVI. More pla.
 ces of Scripture, That in Heb. 10. 38, explained and indicated.
 in

Chap.
IX.

in Scripture that confirm the Truth in question. He that has a mind to see more needs but cast his Eyes on those that are cited at the bottom of this * Page. Whereof some must be false, others Idle and Ridiculous, were the Doctrine of infallible Perseverance true. It must yet be noted that in the turning of these places, there are some ill translated, and namely that of the *Hebrews*, ch. 10. v. 38. which *Beza* has misrendred in the *Latin Version* (and is follow'd by the *Geneva French* and our *English*) to make it more agreeable to his own Hypothesis: For whereas in the *Greek* it is, *The just shall live by Faith; and if he draw back, my Soul hath* (or will no longer have) *pleasure in him*, says God. 'Tis translated, *The just shall live by Faith, but if any one draw back, my Soul hath no pleasure in him*. This *any one* is added to apply it to some wicked Man that never was just; and so God is made to say thus: "The just shall live by Faith, but if any wicked Man draw back, my Soul has no pleasure in him. See the Sense and Coherence of this Discourse: To what purpose is the wicked here: How can the wicked draw back from the Faith? How can God threaten to begin to be displeased with the wicked that was never pleasing to him. But Men had rather fall into these Absurdities, because they do not clash with the Hypothesis they are resolved to maintain, than give this place its natural Sense, which is, that if the just, who lives by Faith, draws back from God, or from his Faith, this just shall become abominable in the sight of God. *The just lives by Faith, but if he draw back, my Soul shall have no pleasure in him*: According to the Hypothesis of absolute Perseverance, the Apostle must have spoken thus. The Just lives by his Faith; but he cannot draw back; or if he do, God must necessarily still take pleasure in him sooner or later.

* 1 Chron. 18. 9. 2 Chron. 15. 2. Mat. 24. 11, 12, 13. Rom. 11. 22. 1 Cor. 15. 2. 2 Cor. 6. 1. ch. 11. 13. 1 Col. 1. 22, 23. 2 Tim. 2. 12. Heb. 3. 12, 13, 14 and ch. 10. 29, 33. 2 Pet. 2. 18, 10 ver. 22. and ch. 3. 17. St. Jude v. 12. Rev. 3. v. 16, &c.

XXXVII. You are to take notice, that in the Passage of St. Jude, though he speaks there of wicked impostors, yet he observes that they were become such, of good and true Believers which they were before: For that is what the Apostle means when he calls them *Trees, twice Dead, pluck'd up by the Roots*. Signifying by this, that these Men were first dead in Adam by the general and common sin; and that they had again taken Life and Root in Jesus Christ; after this, having forsaken this Life and separated themselves from Jesus Christ, they were a second time dead and pluck'd up by the Roots; which saying of his sufficiently destroys the Principles of absolute Perseverance.

XXXVII.
Of a Passage out
of St.
Jude, v.
12.

Solution of Difficulties taken from Scripture.

XXXVIII. I know very well 'tis what they pretend to make out by some places of Scripture; but after what has been said and prov'd, there is nothing more natural than to think that 'tis impossible the Scripture should be for this Doctrine of absolute Perseverance; and that therefore the Passages brought for it must needs be misunderstood. And indeed, the Passages brought here are almost all the same with those that were produc'd by us to prove that on the part of God, of Jesus Christ, and of Grace, Perseverance was absolute and infallible upon five or six Accounts; but they have forgot to consider that so it was on God's part, but on the part of Man encompassed with Infirmities, with good and evil, with distractions and temptations, Man's Perseverance to correspond to God and to entertain his Grace, was only morally certain; and therefore, that it might be interrupted and cease altogether. If any one find it difficult to comprehend this distinction of the certainty of Perseverance with respect to God, and of the same with respect to Man; he needs but consider this similitude: The Sun shines universally and constantly all the Day long upon all Men, and so with respect to the Sun, Light and Heat are, while 'tis Day of infallible Perseverance, and on this side nothing can be wanting; but if Men would turn from the Light, and run into Dungeons, into
Dens

XXXVIII.
A General
answer to
most of
the places
that are
objected
to prove
absolute
Perseve-
rance.

Chap.
X.

Don's and Rocks, it is plain that, with respect to them, the Light and Heat of the Sun would discontinue or rather, that they themselves would discontinue or cease to possess and enjoy them, and find themselves in the horrors of Darkness and Cold. 'Tis thus that God on his side, that his Will, that his Light persevere infallibly, without the least fear of any failure on this side; but Man does not always persevere to correspond thereto, to cleave to it, and abide therein, but distracts and separates himself from it. And so Perseverance fails on Mans side but never on God's. Apply this to the Passages of Scripture which they oppose to the Truth.

XXXIX.

*How
Christ's
Sheep
may or
may not
perish.*

Joh. 10.
28, 29.
John 6.
v. 37.

XXXIX. When Christ said, That his Sheep shall never perish, and that he will give them Eternal Life, and that none shall pluck them out of his Father's Hands: This is to be understood, provided they will abide in Christ's Fold: then none can destroy them; but if they will go out of it and wander astray, the Wolf will devour them. When he says, All that my Father hath given me shall come to me; and him that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out: This is very true, but he does not say, that they that come unto him, shall infallibly continue with him, and that they cannot go from him if they will. In a word, all the Promises and Assurances of Eternal Life that God gives to his, are as to them Conditional; they are upon condition that they continue to correspond and adhere to God, and do not distract nor neglect themselves.

*XL. The
promises
and as-
surances
that God
gives of
Salvati-
on, are
conditio-
nal.*

John 15.
7-10, 14.
Rev. 2.
10.
Heb. 3.
14.

XL. Christ and his Apostle, no doubt knew very well whether it were upon Condition or not that they gave to Believers the Assurances of Eternal Life. Let us here them then: If you abide in me and my words abide in you, ask what you will and it shall be granted you. If you keep my Commandments you shall abide in my Love. You shall be my Friends if you do what I command you. He shall be saved that perseveres to the end (upon condition that Man continue to correspond on his part) Be thou faithful unto Death and I will give thee the Crown of Life. We are, says St. Paul, made partakers of Christ, if we hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast unto the end. These Proofs are to be met with in the Scriptures by hundreds; all God's Promises are almost nothing else but Assurances that he will give

give Eternal Life and the Divine Joys, and that on his side the thing is sure and certain, provided Man on his part correspond to God's Operation. This being expressly declared a thousand times, if there chance to be some places wherein mention is made only of the sureness and certainty of the goods of God, and just after it be not added, that it is on condition that Man continually correspond thereto, must we conclude thence to the exclusion of this condition, which a thousand other places so clearly set before us.

Chap.
X.

XLI. When St. Paul asks, *Who shall separate us from the Love of God? I am persuaded that neither Death nor Life, nor any Creature, &c. shall be able to separate us from it:* This is not at all contrary to the possibility of falling and perishing in some cases. St. Paul had before taught, that they that give themselves up to God by Faith, are justified, have a full Peace with God, and shall inherit Eternal Life; but he says expressly in the same place, that it is on condition that they continue to live after the Spirit and abide steadfast in the midst of Trials: *If you live after the flesh you shall die, but if by the Spirit you mortify the Deeds of the flesh you shall live: We are Heirs of God and joint-Heirs with Christ, only IF we suffer with him.* And that none might be disheartned at the prospect of so many sorts of Afflictions and Tryals, he adds, that we should trust in God, who for his part will never leave us; and while we thus adhere to the immutable and powerful God, nothing foreign and from without shall be able to separate us from the love he bears us. And this is a solid and sure Foundation, *That whosoever resolutely adheres to God, can never in that state be separated from it by any Creature.* But this does not say, that we cannot be separated from him by voluntary Distraction, by negligence and by sin.

XLI. Of
St. Paul's
certainty
and of
the Pas-
sage
Rom. 8.
v. 34,
&c.

Ibid. v.
13 & 17.

St. Paul says no such thing; and yet to favour the Doctrine of absolute Perseverance, he ought to have said, "I am persuaded that neither sin, self-will, nor negligence shall be able to separate me from the Love of God, save in part for a time only, but not entirely and absolutely: St. Paul is far enough from saying so false a thing; he says on the contrary, *I bring under my Body, lest I become a cast away.* The truth is,

1 Co.
9. 27.
St.

Chap.
X.

St. Paul feared to damned as well as another, and it was possible he might be so as long as he liv'd upon Earth, where the most perfect, the *Abraham's*, the *Moses's*, the *Elias's* may be as wicked as *Judas's* if they will but let themselves be distracted by the Impressions which the Devil, the World and the Flesh make upon them. This is what the wise Man thought, who to be sure was very far from the Opinion of this fatal Perseverance of the Saints, when he said of the most Holy of Men, *Enoch*, *He was translated and speedily taken away, lest that wickedness should alter his Understanding, or deceit beguile his Soul; for the bewitching of naughtiness doth obscure things that are honest, and the wandring of Concupiscence doth undermine the simple Mind.*

XLII.
Explication
of
that Pas-
sage of
St. John,
They
went out
from us,
&c. that
it makes
nothing
for ab-
solute
Perseve-
rance.
1 John
2. 19.

XLII. This Passage of St. John, *They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us no doubt they would have continued with us, &c.* does not mean what they would have it to say in favour of the infallible Perseverance of the Predestinate and Regenerate. We need but to set down the Passage entire, which is this, *Little Children, it is the last time, and as you have heard that Antichrist shall come, even now are there many Antichrists. They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us they would have continued with us: but they went out, that they might be made manifest that they were not of us.* What St. John would say, is this, "Little Children, you have heard that there shall come a Deceiver, that by his Frauds shall turn Men away from Christ; now there are already many of these Deceivers; of these pernicious Teachers, of these false Apostles, who once were with us, but are now separated from us; and 'tis a sign they were not of the number of us the true Apostles, Teachers and Pastors; but were false Workers, that had crept in and intruded themselves amongst us: for if they had been true Teachers, they would not have separated from our Doctrine and Communion, as they have; from whence it is manifest that they profess'd themselves ours in Appearance only; and not that they were so indeed. Read the rest of the Chapter and you will see that this does no way in the

the least look towards the Doctrine of the absolute Perseverance of the Predestinate; and beside that, it would be absurd to make St. John say here, that such as separate by Errour or by Schism, do thereby plainly shew that they are not Predestinated to Eternal Life, but that they are eternally and unalterably Reprobated, beyond all possibility of ever being sav'd. Whoever thought that Apostacy was a decisive mark that a Man is not Predestinated to Eternal Life, but that he is Reprobated, and that this was what the Apostles intended to teach? I shall not give my self the trouble to shew that this would be to heap Absurdities on Absurdities.

Chap.
X.

XLIII. I shall say one word more upon a Passage that is brought as one of the most favourable upon this Subject; 'tis when Christ says, *There shall arise false Christs and false Prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders, insomuch that (if possible) they shall deceive the very Elect.* And they hence conclude, that it is impossible for the Elect to be deceived; and I for my part hence conclude the quite contrary, that 'tis possible the Elect may be deceived. For the Devil would not be so foolish as to tempt them by his false Prophets, and cheat them with fine and flattering Appearances, if it were true that they could not be deceived. I know the Devil may assault some of whose Perseverance he is assured, and of this I have spoken positively enough before; but then he does not set upon to deceive them by specious and pleasing Appearances, but only to make them suffer and torment them, without aiming at any thing more. It is otherwise when he sees the delusion is only what is possible; then he employs all his Artifices to try whether he cannot from the state of possibility reduce it to act. This *if possible*, take notice that in the Original it is not *if it were possible*, but only *if possible*, if perchance, this word respects not the state or the nature of the thing in itself, and much less does it suppose the thing impossible: On the contrary, taking the thing to be in itself possible, it considers, if being possible, such and such means and endeavours may not make it pass from power into act: This *if possible*

XLII.
Explication of the Passage of St. Matthew, ch. 24.

See above ch. vi. Article 23.

Chap.
X.

therefore has an Eye to the means with reference to the event, whether it will not be possible to bring actually to pass by such means, as signs and wonders, a thing that is not in itself impossible; but which is very possible. 'Tis then as if *Christ* had said, the Devil and his Accomplices shall shew signs and wonders, to see if they *may not* by them deceive the very Elect, or if it will be possible for them thereby to deceive the very Elect.

In good earnest, Is this to say, that it is impossible the Elect should fall? To my thinking it signifies the contrary, and besides the inconvenience, I have already taken notice of in the supposition of infallible perseverance; there would be absurdity in the Discourse they would attribute to *Jesus Christ*, making him say, (v. 4, 5, 11, 12, 32, 24, 25.) "Take heed, my Apostles and Elect that ye be not deceiv'd: Many will come in my Name, and will deceive many. Abundance of false Prophets will arise and deceive many----- the Love of many shall wax cold----- unless these Days were shorten'd, none could be saved: But for the Elects sake (lest they should be deceiv'd and that they might be sav'd) these Days shall be shorten'd. Nevertheless these false *Christ's* and false Prophets shall do prodigious and wonderful things, thereby to deceive, if possible, the Elect. Beware of them, my Elect: I now warn you to be upon your guard, lest they deceive you, lest they do to you what yet it is impossible they should do to you; lest that befall you which yet after all can never befall you; for 'tis absolutely impossible they should ever deceive my Elect."

How excellently well this Discourse agrees with itself! Men would hardly be so silly to talk thus, and yet they are not asham'd to ascribe such Reasonings to Wisdom itself.

I stay no longer on this Passage, from which I might take occasion to speak of many things, as, that the Election *Christ* speaks of here, is no absolute and fatal Election, as is imagin'd; but an Election suitable to the way of acting of a God that is free, with free Creatures; and that there are several sorts of divine Elections,

Elections, and several sorts of God's Elect; and lastly, that it is impossible in some sense, that a certain sort of the Elect of God should Perish. Yet of these a word or two will not be amiss.

Chap.
X.

XLIV. There are several sorts of Elections on God's part.

XLIV.

(1.) It may be said, that of them there is one preventing, as when after the fall of Man, it being in God's power to choose to leave them all in the destruction they had brought on themselves, he elected and chose to present his Grace to them; and so he elected them all to the offer of Pardon and of Life, thro' his Mercy.

Four
sorts of
Elections,
and of the
Elect of
God, that
among
these some
are more
easily de-
ceiv'd
than o-
thers.

There are other consequent Elections more special, and indeed, whose effect is conditional, as,

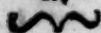
(2.) When some having corresponded to the offer of God's Grace, having chosen and embraced it, God chooses them for his Children, to whom he will actually give Salvation, on Condition they persevere to be Faithful to him.

(3.) There is yet one particular sort of election and restraint to certain Graces and certain Persons, as when God in consequence of the exceeding great Fidelity of some one of his Friends, chooses his Posterity to bestow on them singular favours and advantages: Hence it is that the Nation of the Jews is stiled in Scripture, a *Chosen Nation*, or the Nation of the *Elect*.

(4.) Lastly, There is a very particular Election, which is made when a Person is purely, absolutely, irrevocably, and constantly given up to God, to whom he has gotten an habit of adhering without ceasing, and without any consideration of self. These God elects for his most intimate Friends and Spouses, even in this Life.

These are the Elect (but they are exceeding rare) that cannot perish; not absolutely, and of Physical impossibility, but morally and of an impossibility of great difficulty; for they being very much enlighten'd, and very inward and familiar with God, and God communicating to them very singular and extraordinary Treasures and Graces, they presently discover the wiles of Satan, and of his false *Christ's* and false Prophets; and so 'tis morally impossible these elect should be deceiv'd.

Chap.
X.



But the Elect of our second rank, which are such as God has not as yet elected and chosen to be his Spouses and his most intimate and familiar Friends, but only to be his Servants and Domesticks, or adopted Children, as yet very weak and far from solid Perfection; these Elect that have chosen to forsake Sin, and mortify their Corruption, and to pluck up the evil in them by the roots, to grow in the Grace of God, in Faith and Purification, which they have not yet perfectly finish'd, these Elect may easily Perish. *Christ* says the false Prophets will deceive many of these, and that were it not for God's shortning the Days, they would all be deceiv'd and Perish.

The Emblem of a Dragon casting from Heaven unto the Earth a third part of the Stars of Heaven, sets before us not only the possibility, but the very actual event of the seduction of a great Number of these Elect. And so let us look on the saying of *Christ* how we will, *That false Prophets should deceive the very Elect if it were possible*, yet we cannot, as some imagine, infer from it any thing in favour of the Doctrine of infallible Perseverance, or of the absolute impossibility of Perishing.

The Son of God was far from laying such a stumbling-block in Men's way, he who makes the fear of God every where to be inculcated to them; who says by his Apostle to those that were engrafted on his Holy stock, and nourish'd with his sap, that is to the
 Rom. 11. Regenerate. *Be not high-minded, but fear, for if God*
 20, 21. *spar'd not the natural branches, take heed lest he spare*
not thee. Otherwise thou also shalt be cut off. Blessed
(therefore) is the Man that feareth always, says the
 Wise Man. *Happy are they that govern themselves ac-*
 cording to the word of the Royal Prophet, rather than
 upon the false assurances that impotent Men give
 Psal. 2. them. *Serve the Lord with Fear, and rejoice with*
 11. *Trembling.*

(5.) There is a Fifth (but very rare) sort of Election, viz. When some who have already attain'd the Degree of Perfection to which they were call'd in this Life, and have unweariedly run their race of Probation, and are now just ready to be translated to God

God to receive their Crown; when these, I say, are again elected by him to continue somewhat longer upon Earth, not on their own account, but on that of others, and for the Glory of God, that they may bring over other Men to him. It is probable that such Persons are so confirm'd in the Grace of God, and so closely united to him, by some emanations of his Glory, that they cannot for the future be shaken by any created things, nor are they any more endanger'd by the fickleness and mutability of their Liberty. If there be any such Persons upon Earth, their perseverance is absolute and infallible: But this being out of the common road, no general Conclusion can be drawn from it. Yea such Persons cannot know that this is their case unless it be God's Pleasure to reveal it to them.

Chap.
X.

XLV. I have now finish'd what I had to say concerning the Co-operation of Man with the Operation of God which is interwoven with it; which is what we took for the subject of this part of our Work. We have therein, I think, touch'd what is most essential in the general, concerning the Divine Operation, and the necessity thereof; and in the Operation of Man, and the necessity of not confounding it with the Operation of God. And then, out of all the Operations of God, we have selected that of Faith, to consider it a little more particularly, as also the manner how Man on his part ought to Co-operate therewith; after this, we have somewhat enlarg'd upon the consideration of the nature of Faith, and likewise upon some of its principal Effects, such as Purification, Justification, Regeneration, and their Duration or Perseverance, which are all that belongs to Faith, and flow from it: So that true Faith is the Spring and Centre of the whole Oeconomy of Man's Salvation: and after all the Truths that we have demonstrated concerning it, we may thus describe it: "Faith is a Divine
"Light and Love offer'd to the Soul out of the pure
"Grace and Favour of God and of the Merits of
"Jesus Christ, which striking the Soul gives it a
"sight of good and evil; and being receiv'd into it
with

XLV.
Recapitulation of
this
Book:
That
Faith
compre-
hends the
whole Oe-
conomy of
Salvati-
on. With
its De-
scription
at large.

Chap.
X.

“ with a good will, gives the Soul strength to do by
 “ little and little good Works, at first after a gross
 “ and imperfect manner ; and then still more strongly,
 “ till the Soul yielding up itself, to the utmost
 “ of its Power, absolutely to God by desire, intelli-
 “ gence, and acquiescence, this divine Light produces
 “ in it the perfect Death of Evil, and the Life of
 “ Goodness, of Purification, of Justification, and a
 “ new Life, which grows and abounds in the Fruits
 “ of the Holy Spirit, a Life wholly Supernatural, tho’
 “ encompass’d with many infirmities, which if the
 “ Soul will incline to, and receive the Impressions
 “ which the Devil and the World will through them
 “ make upon it, may become to it an occasion of a
 “ new Fall and Perdition ; but if it persevere as it
 “ is easy for it through the Grace of God, (who on
 “ his side is never wanting to it) and through the
 “ habit and easiness which it has to Goodness, it shall
 “ here in this Life be strengthen’d more and more
 “ in the Divine Grace, elected and chosen even here
 “ for his Spouse and intimate Friend ; and at the end
 “ of this mortal Life, shall be swallow’d up in the
 “ fulness of this boundless and glorious Light, which
 “ will then so perfectly save it from all dangers,
 “ that it can never be separated more from its God,
 “ who will then without interruption and for ever
 “ with Love and Familiarity rejoice and delight him-
 “ self with the Soul.

And this is the end of the Creation, and of the Re-
 demption, and Eternal Life. ’Tis for this that God
 ever did and does still work, expecting that we on
 our part would begin to move a hand in a work,
 which being indifferent to him for his own Happiness,
 is so necessary to us for ours. How long has he bore
 with us in the voluntary infatuation into which the
 Devil has thrown us, to labour diligently after every
 thing, but in the work of our Salvation, and after the
 one thing necessary ; and to lay out our desires, our
 hearts, our minds, our faculties, our time and our
 pains, on the killing as well as perishing Follies of the
 Earth ! How long has he cry’d to us, *Ho ! every one*
that thirsteth (that are full of so many desires) *come*

Isa. 55.
I, &c.

ye to the Water-Springs! Ye that have no Money (that are void of Spiritual Riches) come buy and Eat; yea come buy Wine and Milk without Money and without Price. Why do ye lay out your Money upon that which cannot feed you, and your Labour, upon that which cannot satisfy? Harken attentively to me, Eat of the good Food which I offer you, and your Soul, being as it were fatten'd with it, shall be in joy. Incline your Ear and come unto me, hear and your Soul shall find Life. I will make an Everlasting Covenant with you, to make sure the Mercy I promis'd to David. Seek the Lord while he may be found, call upon him whilst he is near. Let the Wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous Man his Thoughts, and let him return unto the Lord and he will have Mercy upon him, and to our God for he has infinite Goodness to pardon Sins.

Chap.
X.

XLVI. May we find it so, and at last be crown'd with the treasures of his Grace after a faithful correspondence on our part, with setting us free from all vain objects, and particularly from the adhesion to dead Faith, or to corrupt Reason and its Ideas, may it make us grow in the true Faith, and bring forth all its fruits, and attain its everlasting end. I think I cannot conclude this Book better than with an admirable Passage out of the Pious *a Kempis*, * which is as it were a Song of Grace, and an Abridgment of what has been treated of in this Book, and of the disposition of Mind and Heart, wherein we ought to be in this respect. You will there easily observe that as we have spoken of Grace, and the necessity of it, of dead Faith or human Reason, of the divine Faith of Desire, of Illumination and of Love; of Purification, of Justification, of Peace, of Regeneration and Perseverance, he hath also treated of those, and almost in the same order. No pious Person will think it improper that I conclude this Treatise with the bright and ardent Thoughts of that Divine Soul, would to God they could kindle in our frozen Hearts a Heavenly Flame that might make us undervalue the Fruits of our corrupt Faculties, give our selves up to living Faith, and say,

XLVI.
Conclusi-
on of this
Treatise
with an
excellent
Passage of
Kempis,
wherein
the order
and sub-
stance of
it is con-
tained.
* Book 3.
ch. 55.

(1.) Reason,

Chap. X.

(1.) Reason or
dead
Faith.

(1.) *Reason*, thou wavering ineffectual Light,
Vainly dost thou display the Rules of Life!
Vainly point out that Path the perfect tread!
If thy Ideas impotent to act,
Afford no aid to keep the narrow way!
If my Corruption's vile repressing weight
Bears down thy weak Attempts to raise my Soul,
And thy vast Projects which thou ne'er fulfill'st,
Cannot from Imperfection set me Free.

(2.) Living Faith:
the Grace,
of Di-
vine De-
sire.

(2.) *O Grace* Divine, without whose powerful aid
I nothing can perform, needful thou art
Or to begin, pursue, or perfect ought that's Good!
Yes, yes, my God, in Thee I all things can,
If thou assist to regulate my work,
If thou enlighten with thy piercing Rays.

Of Illu-
mination.

Where *Grace* is wanting nothing is of worth,
The most desir'd of Natures various Gifts
Devoid of this are vain Delusions all,
By every pure enlightned Soul contemn'd;
Arts, Riches, Beauty, Wit, and Eloquence,
(The Pride of Man) before thy Majesty
Are Trifles all, unsanctify'd by *Grace*.

Of Love.

Rash Nature blindly scatters her best Gifts,
To good and bad alike is Prodigal,
Nor ought but Transitory things bestows;
But Love, that noblest product of thy *Grace*,
Is of the Faithful an undoubted Mark,
And all who bear the Sacred Fruit become
Worthy that Day which ne'er shall end in Night.

Nothing
can please
God with-
out Grace
and
Faith.

Grace gives to all the Rank they ought to hold,
The highest Talents in themselves are nought,
Though we cou'd great Events to come foretell,
Unfold the deepest Heavenly Mysteries,
Give Hearing to the Deaf, Sight to the Blind,
With all these splendid Miracles we're nothing;
Evn * Faith and Hope, with every shining Vertue,

* *Historical Faith.*

If void of Charity, of *Grace* Divine,
How e'er exalted, fall before thy Face,
Like short-liv'd Flowers that droop their fading Heads.

*Grace is
the Foun-
tain of
all good.*

O Treasure which the World ne'er understood!
O *Grace* that to the poor in Spirit gives
The only real Riches, sacred Vertue
That can't endue ev'n Wealth with Sanctity,
By that Humility thou do'st sustain,
Maugre our Pride, that every Good defiles.
Early Descend! O pour into my Heart
Thy quickning Operations, source of Life,
Least dry and barren in this Field of Thorns,
It wither fruitless, void of vital Pow'r!

(3.) Grant me thy *Grace*, and let me be deny'd
Whate'er the natural Man Tumultuous craves;
Thy *Grace* supplies the place of every Good,
Ev'n in the lowest state, afflicted, tempted,
Betray'd, Forsaken, nothing can I fear;
Thy *Grace* is my Support, my Counsel, Strength,
In Pow'r surpassing all our Enemies,
As she in Wisdom all the wise excells.

(3.) *The
Grace of
active
Purifica-
tion.*

(4.) Thy *Grace* illuminates the humble Heart,
Instructs in Truth, and Disciplines our Life;

(4.) *The
Grace of
Passive
Purifica-
tion.*

(5.) Thy *Grace* supports us under every weight,
Drives all the ruffling Passions from the Soul,
Sadness, and Rage, and false unworthy Fears;
Thy *Grace* Devotion breeds and nourishes,
To holy Love gives Tears, and gentle sighs,
Which she herself bears even up to thee.

(5.) *The
Grace of
Justifica-
tion,
Peace
and Di-*

vine Communion.

(6.) O what am I without thy quickning *Grace*?
A fruitless Tree, a Log, a sapless Trunk,
For nothing fit but Fuel to the Flames.

(6.) *Without
Grace
there can*

be no Regeneration, nor Eternal Life.

(7.) Grant then, Great God, this All-sufficient Aid,
 Prayers for Per- Let it preeceed, and ever follow me,
 severance. Inciting, Perfecting in every Vertue;
 Grant this Eternal Father, I conjure thee,
 By Jesus thine own Son, that living Source,
 From whence these purifying Waters flow, Amen.

It is good to wait with silence for the Salvation of God,
 Lam. 3. 26.

I have waited for thy Salvation, O Lord, Gen. 49.
 18.

The End of the Oeconomy of Co- Operation.

7 DE61

ERRATA, to the Fifth Volume.

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ERRATA to the 1855 Volume.

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